

KENTUCKY SCHOOL UPDATES:

A Parent/Citizen Guide for 2006-08

Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence

December 2006

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Lexington, Kentucky

December 2006

INTRODUCTION

Kentucky School Updates: A Parent/Citizen Guide, is a biennial publication of the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence. It is intended to help parents and citizens stay up-to-date on Kentucky's standards-based education system. It is published every other year following the 60-day even-year sessions of the Kentucky General Assembly.

This document is a reference for parents and citizens. The Table of Contents will guide you to specific programs or areas of interest. In most sections you will find the basics of the law, what progress has been made, what you can do to get involved, and how to get additional information.

We believe parents and citizens should communicate with elected officials who make decisions about education. We will leave it to you to find your local school board members, but we include information in the section on parent involvement called "Stay in contact with your state legislators." We hope you will talk with them about the good things in your schools as well as problems you observe.

Many contributed to this publication. The Kentucky Department of Education generously printed enough copies of this edition to distribute to schools, school districts and parents. Staff members at the Kentucky Department of Education, the Education Professional Standards Board, the Center for School Safety, the Cabinet for Families and Children, the Council on Postsecondary Education, and the Kentucky Education Higher Education Assistance Authority graciously provided updated information and reviewed materials for accuracy. We extend our appreciation to those friends. Michelle Whitaker, from our staff, prepared the final copy for printing. She deserves our special thanks.

We believe informed and involved parents and citizens are critical to school success. Educators cannot reach the state goal of proficiency by 2014 without the support of families and communities. Your interest and support are important. We hope this guidebook will provide you with the information you need to be involved in education in your community. I invite you to send additional questions, comments or suggestions.

Cindy Heine
Associate Executive Director

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KENTUCKY SCHOOL UPDATES 2006-2008

ASSESSMENT AND SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- In Kentucky, **schools have been held accountable for student learning** since 1992 through state requirements established by the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990. The Federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) under Title I added more accountability. The state's Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) provides assistance and sanctions for failing to meet expectations for all Kentucky schools. NCLB calculates school success or failure for all schools but requires assistance and sanctions only for Title I schools failing to make progress.
- CATS and NCLB use the same Kentucky learning standards and tests, but use different calculations to determine school success or failure. The Kentucky Board of Education is responsible for establishing the rules for CATS and NCLB within the structure of the state and federal laws.

High standards – both content and performance have been established for all students and are described below.

Content Standards set out what students need to know and be able to do. They are defined by the following.

- **Six student learning goals** were established by the 1990 Kentucky General Assembly and revised in 2000. They establish the basis for student learning. In 1994 the legislature decided that two of the six goals (three and four) would not be assessed for school accountability. (See list on the inside of the back cover.)
- The six goals are further defined in a list of **57 Academic Expectations**, which were adopted by the state board and approved by two legislative committees.
- The **Core Content for Assessment (core content)**, provides lists of content in reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, arts and humanities, and practical living and vocational studies, as required by law. This content is used to develop Kentucky's tests. Changes in the Core Content for Assessment must be developed through a public process involving parents and citizens. The 2006 revision added a Depth of Knowledge dimension which indicates the cognitive demand or the level to which students must know and use the core content. Core Content Cards provide this information in an easy-to-use format and are available from the Kentucky Association of School Councils, (859) 238-2188.
- The **Program of Studies** is an outline of the minimum content to be taught in Kentucky schools and is more extensive than the Core Content. It was revised in 2006.
- The **Combined Curriculum**, created in 2006, includes the Academic Expectations, Core Content and Program of Studies in one easy-to-use document for teachers as they develop curriculum and for parents and the public to know what is to be taught in Kentucky schools. It is available on the Kentucky Department of Education Web site at www.education.ky.gov. (Search for Combined Curriculum.)

Performance standards, were established by the Board of Education to define how well students learn the Core Content. These standards were last updated in June 2001 and describe skills and knowledge students demonstrate at each performance level for each content area. Individual scoring guides are written for each open response item .

- Based on the performance standards, student work was originally categorized as novice, apprentice, proficient, and distinguished. In 1999 these levels for reading, mathematics, science, and social studies were expanded to give schools credit for improved performance and include:
 - ✓ non-performance
 - ✓ medium novice
 - ✓ high novice
 - ✓ low apprentice
 - ✓ medium apprentice
 - ✓ high apprentice
 - ✓ proficient
 - ✓ distinguished
- Arts and humanities, practical living/vocational, and writing are scored non-performance, novice, apprentice, proficient, and distinguished.

Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS)

The 1990 General Assembly required the development of a state assessment and accountability system which was known as the Kentucky Instructional Results Information System or KIRIS. In 1998 the legislature abolished KIRIS and created the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS).

Assessment: The **Kentucky Core Content Tests** have been created to assess whether students are learning the core content in reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, arts and humanities, and practical living/vocational studies. (See chart on page 6 for a full summary of testing.) They include the following test items:

- ✓ multiple-choice questions
- ✓ open-response questions (require an answer that may include a written explanation, graph, pictures, diagrams, or charts)
- ✓ writing prompts (questions that require longer, more developed writing responses)

Also included in school assessment program:

- ✓ norm-referenced, multiple choice tests (Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills/5 or CTBS/5) Beginning in 2007-08, this will be replaced in middle school with EXPLORE and in high school with PLAN. See below and the Chapter on High schools page 34.
- ✓ writing portfolios: Beginning in 2006-07 requirements for writing portfolios will change. See What's New on page 13.
- ✓ alternate portfolios – portfolios designed for students with disabilities who cannot participate in the regular curriculum.

In 2006 the legislature required the following tests in addition to the Kentucky Core Content Tests. Determination about using results from these tests for school accountability will be made by the Kentucky Board of Education after a study comparing ACT test standards to the Core Content.

- High school readiness exam in grade eight (**EXPLORE**). A college readiness exam in grade 10 (**PLAN**) to assess English, reading, mathematics and science, and **ACT** college admissions test to assess English, reading, mathematics and science in grade 11.
- A **WorkKeys** assessment in reading for information, locating information and applied mathematics, skills needed in the workplace, will be optional for students in grades ten, eleven and twelve. Results from these tests may or may not be included in school accountability. For more information on WorkKeys, see High Schools, page 34.
- The law also requires **performance assessment events** for schools that have students enrolled in performing arts organizations. Schools with band, chorus, or orchestra that participate in state-sanctioned contests must report results or scores on the school report card. These results are not used for school accountability.
- A technically sound **longitudinal comparison** of test results, comparing the same students over time is also required by state law. Because Federal law requires testing students in grades three through eight every year in reading and mathematics, the department has added reading tests in grades five and eight, and math tests in grades four and seven. The Kentucky Board of Education may add a “growth measure” to take into account the progress students make each year. This could not be included in accountability until 2008 or later.
- Successful school performance under CATS also includes student attendance, retention, dropout rates, and successful transition to adult life (college, jobs, or military). These are known as noncognitive or **nonacademic indicators of school success**. They are not used for NCLB calculations.

Kentucky school accountability: The Kentucky Board of Education established a system as directed by state law, to compare individual school progress in two-year cycles using school tests, portfolios, and nonacademic indicators, calculated in an accountability index. Schools have been given rewards, assistance and/or sanctions based on whether or not they meet their goals. The rewards have not been funded since 2002.

- A baseline score was established using combined 1998-99 and 1999-2000 test scores in a school accountability index. Every two years, the combined assessment scores are compared to the baseline to determine progress. By 2014 every school is expected to reach a score of 100 on a scale of 0-140. Each school has a growth chart showing its baseline, two-year scores and progress needed to reach 100 by 2014. These charts appear in each School Report Card and can be found on the Department of Education Web site. (See sample chart on page 5.)
- Schools are categorized as:
 - ✓ **MEETING GOAL** or improving enough to be on target for reaching 100 by 2014
 - ✓ **PROGRESSING** or falling below the meeting goal line but not dropping into the assistance category; any school scoring above 80 is also considered progressing.
 - ✓ **ASSISTANCE**, or dropping below the baseline; schools scoring above 80 will never be placed in the assistance category.
- A statistical margin of error band or fairness margin is calculated and added to the accountability index to ensure schools are not incorrectly labeled. This is especially important for small schools.

- **Rewards:** Prior to 2003, the legislature provided funding for financial rewards for schools that met learning goals based on several factors. These funds were given to schools for school purposes as determined by the school council (or the principal in schools without a council) and could be used for the school and/or staff bonuses. Rewards are no longer available.
- **Pacesetter schools** are those that score in the top five percent of all schools at or above 88 with an acceptable dropout rate and no decline in the previous two cycles.

ASSISTANCE: Schools in the **ASSISTANCE CATEGORY** are divided into three levels and required to do the following:

Level 1: Schools whose index scores are in the top one third of those in the assistance category:

- ✓ must conduct a scholastic review and self-study with public input, facilitated by the district professional development coordinator;
- ✓ must make the resulting report and recommendations, which will be incorporated in the school improvement plan, available to the public with discussion at the next school council and school board meetings;
- ✓ may apply for school improvement funds; the school council must determine whether or not to seek these funds;
- ✓ may review the teacher evaluation process and make recommendations to improve the evaluation and professional growth plans.

Level 2: Schools whose index scores fall in the middle one third of those in the assistance category:

- ✓ must conduct a scholastic review and self-study with public input, facilitated by a designee of the Commissioner of Education;
- ✓ must make the resulting report and recommendations, which will be incorporated in the school improvement plan, available to the public with discussion at the next school council and school board meetings;
- ✓ may apply for school improvement funds, as determined by school council approval;
- ✓ must review the teacher evaluation process and make recommendations to improve the evaluation and professional growth plans.

Level 3: Schools whose index scores fall in the bottom one third of those in the assistance category:

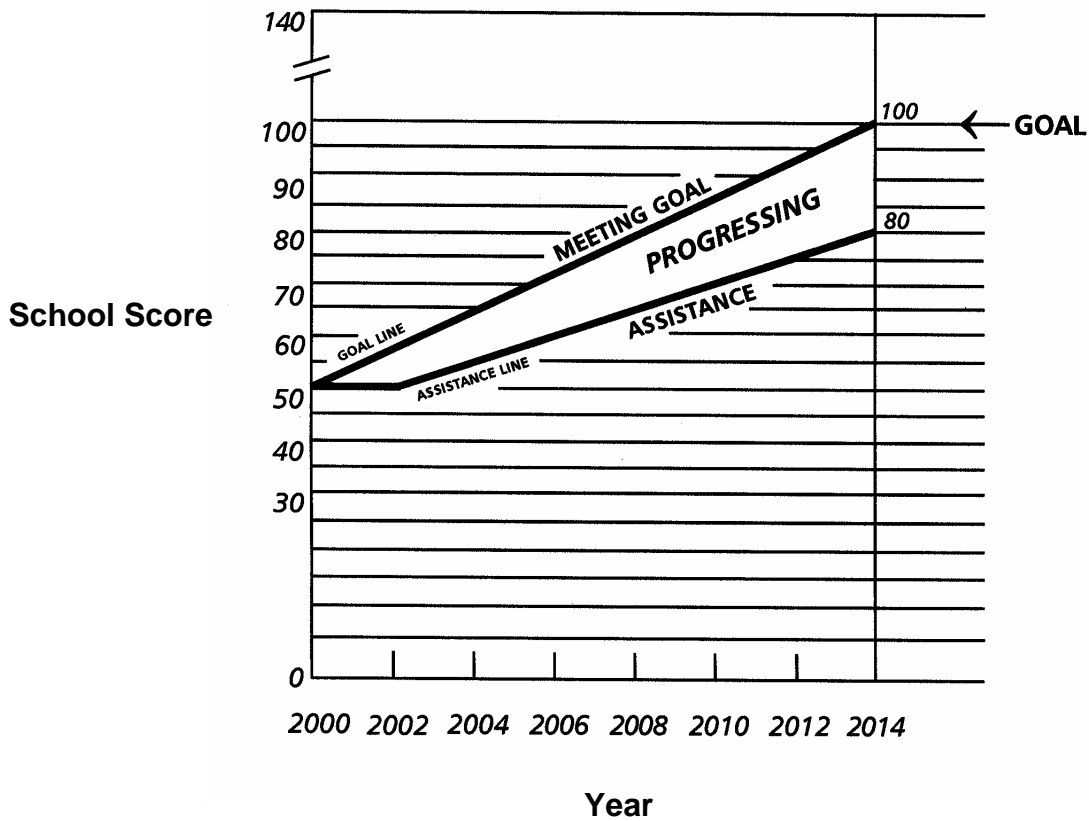
- ✓ receive assistance from a highly skilled educator;
- ✓ are subject to a full scholastic audit conducted by a team designated by the state;
- ✓ may apply for school improvement funds, as determined by the school council;
- ✓ are subject to teacher evaluation review, recommendations for professional growth plans, and possible additional evaluations, which could lead to dismissal or transfer of principals, teachers, and school council members. Students in schools that remain in Level 3 for two or more consecutive cycles may transfer at district expense to a successful school.
- ✓ may, if they remain at Level 3 for two consecutive cycles and on recommendation of the audit team, lose the ability of the school council to make hiring decisions.

- The **scholastic audit process**, a part of the state's mandated assistance for schools, is a comprehensive review of a school's learning environment, organizational efficiency, and academic performance of students. The **Standards and Indicators of School Improvement (SISI)** document is used for this review. Results of these audits are used to determine the level of support necessary for continuous improvement of student academic performance and after two consecutive audits required by Level 3 status, can include a recommendation for transfer of hiring authority from the school council. Audit teams include teachers, administrators, and parents.

COMMONWEALTH ACCOUNTABILITY TESTING SYSTEM

Long-term Accountability Model

Each school has a customized chart like this one using its own baseline score, and a goal of 100 by year 2014. This example is a hypothetical school with a baseline of 50. Each school's chart is included in its school report card.



TESTING OVERVIEW FOR THE 2006–07 SCHOOL YEAR										
★ = Spring Testing. ☼ = Fall Testing. ☆ = Optional Testing.										
	End of Primary	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Reading Core Content	★	★	★	★	★	★		★		
Mathematics Core Content	★	★	★	★	★	★			★	
Science Core Content		★			★				★	
Social Studies Core Content			★			★			★	
Arts & Humanities Core Content			★			★			★	
Practical/Vocational Core Content		★			★			★		
Writing Portfolio		★			★					★
On-Demand Writing			★			★				☼
Norm-Referenced Test: Reading, Language Arts, and Mathematics		Cancelled for fall 2006								
Explore Test: English, Reading, Mathematics, Science (High School Readiness)						☼				
Plan Test: English, Reading, Mathematics, Science (College Readiness)								☼		

TESTING OVERVIEW FOR THE 2007–08 SCHOOL YEAR										
★ = Spring Testing. ☼ = Fall Testing. ☆ = Optional Testing.										
	End of Primary	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Reading Core Content	★	★	★	★	★	★		★		
Mathematics Core Content	★	★	★	★	★	★			★	
Science Core Content		★			★				★	
Social Studies Core Content			★			★			★	
Arts & Humanities Core Content			★			★			★	
Practical/Vocational Core Content		★			★			★		
Writing Portfolio		★			★					★
On-Demand Writing			★			★				☼
Norm-Referenced Test: Reading, Language Arts, and Mathematics		To Be Determined								
Explore Test: English, Reading, Mathematics, Science (High School Readiness)						☼				
Plan Test: English, Reading, Mathematics, Science (College Readiness)								☼		
ACT									☼	
WorkKeys								☆	☆	☆

ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY OVERVIEW: NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND AND KENTUCKY

WHICH STUDENT RESULTS COUNT?	
NCLB: Schools get credit for the percent of students who score proficient or above in reading and math.	Kentucky accountability: Schools get credit for proficient students, partial credit for novice and apprentice students, and extra credit for distinguished students, counting results for all seven Core Content subjects.

WHAT GOALS MUST SCHOOLS MEET FOR STUDENTS OVERALL?

NCLB requires schools to reach ALL of the following:

- An annual measurable objective for reading.
- An annual measurable objective for math.
- A participation objective to test 95percent of students.
- A objective for increasing the graduation rate for high schools and a CATS Classification of any category of progressing or meeting goal or if in assistance grow at or above the state average for schools with the same grade configuration for elementary and middle schools.

The objectives are set statewide: all schools that serve the same grades have the same reading and math objectives. Missing any objective means Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) has not been met.

Kentucky accountability requires schools to reach an Accountability Index goal that combines all the subjects and performance levels for two years, plus some nonacademic data. Schools have their own goals depending on where they started in 2000: those that are farthest from an accountability index of 100 must make the most progress. Schools that miss their goals are denied reward status and schools that miss by a lot are subject to intervention.

Kentucky accountability also has consequences if a school exceeds the statewide target for dropouts or misses a school-level target for lowering the percent of students scoring novice.

WHAT GOALS MUST SCHOOLS MEET FOR ACHIEVEMENT GAPS?

NCLB requires each subgroup to meet all the statewide objectives described above. NCLB addresses subgroups based on ethnicity, English proficiency, poverty, and disability. Subgroups with fewer than 10 students in a grade and 60 in the school or less than 15percent of the school population - are not reported as a target student population at the school level.

Kentucky accountability (Senate Bill 168) requires school targets for reducing each substantive achievement gap, set jointly by councils, superintendents, and boards. SB 168 addresses subgroups based on gender, ethnicity, English proficiency, poverty, and disability. Subgroups with fewer than 10 students in a grade are not considered.

WHAT HAPPENS IF A SCHOOL FALLS SHORT OF ITS GOALS?

NCLB intervention grows with each year a school or any group at the school falls short of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP):

- Year 2: Notify parents, revise school improvement plan, and implement parental option to choose another school, spending at least 10percent of Title 1 on professional development (PD). Year 2 results in Tier 1 Consequences for No Child Left Behind Improvement Schools.
- Year 3: Add supplemental services, while continuing school choice, 10percent Title 1 on PD, and plan revisions. (Tier 2)
- Year 4: Add corrective action by school district, while continuing services, school choice, 10percent on PD, and plan revisions. (Tier 3)
- Year 5: Design alternative governance, while continuing corrective action, services, choice, 10percent on PD, and plan revisions. (Tier 3)
- Year 6: Implement alternative governance, while continuing corrective action, services, choice, 10percent on PD, and plan revisions. (Tier 5)

District NCLB accountability can also affect schools. For example, if a district or any group in the district misses AYP two years in a row, 10percent of the total district Title 1 budget must be spent on professional development. The district may have to alter some school Title 1 allocations to meet that requirement.

Kentucky intervention grows the further a school is from its two year goal:

- Assistance Level 1: A district-led scholastic review analyzes school practices. The school plans improvements and can receive Commonwealth School Improvement Funds.
- Assistance Level 2: Same as above, but the Commissioner of Education designates the leader of the review team.
- Assistance Level 3: An outside team conducts a full scholastic audit, including analysis of staff evaluation needs. The school plans improvements and can receive Commonwealth School Improvement Funds and the help of a Highly Skilled Educator (HSE). Further staff evaluations could lead to demotions, transfers, or dismissals. The Council may be identified for improvement.
- Assistance Level 3 for two cycles: Continue Level 3 interventions and add parental option to choose another school. Council authority could be transferred to superintendent or HSE.

SB 168 requires that if any subgroup falls short of the targets set locally, council plans for professional development and extended school services need approval from the superintendent. After falling short a second cycle, the school's entire plan needs approval from the Commissioner of Education.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

The federal law, No Child Left Behind or NCLB, enacted in 2001, shares similar basic goals with Kentucky's 1990 law that established a standards-based system of school accountability including high expectations for all students, rigorous student performance standards tied to annual assessments, school accountability and school performance information for parents in the form of school report cards. See chart on pages 6-7 for comparisons.

Standards and Assessments for NCLB: NCLB requires states to determine their own standards and assessments. The standards and assessments developed for Kentucky's accountability system (CATS) are also used for NCLB.

Accountability for NCLB: Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP): Schools must make adequate yearly progress (AYP) under the federal accountability program. All schools are identified as either making AYP or being an "NCLB improvement school," but only Title I schools, those receiving extra federal funding for students in poverty, are subject to the consequences. A school becomes an NCLB improvement school if it fails to make AYP two years in a row in the same content area.

Adequate yearly progress requires schools to meet the following objectives:

1. Meeting an annual measurable objective in reading and math in grades 3-8 and one year of high school for all students and for each subgroup of students of sufficient size or large enough to be reported. Annual measurable objectives are yearly targets for getting 100 percent of students to the proficient or distinguished performance levels by 2014. The targets apply to the school as a whole and to subgroups based on:

- ✓ race/ethnicity
- ✓ limited English proficiency
- ✓ poverty and
- ✓ disability.

If students in one subgroup do not reach the target, the school does not meet AYP.

- **Sufficient Size for Annual Measurable Objectives:** For subgroups to be included in school accountability, there must be 10 or more students in each grade tested and 60 students in the school in that subgroup or that subgroup must comprise 15 percent or more of all students in the school who take the test. If there are fewer students than this in a subgroup, they are counted at the district level for subgroup determination and accountability.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CATS AND NCLB: CATS averages all test scores together and includes noncognitive data to determine the school's "accountability index" for school accountability. Senate Bill 168 requires school councils to address gaps in achievement among subgroups. NCLB uses the percent of students reaching proficiency or higher for the school as a whole and for each subgroup of students for school accountability.

2. Meeting student participation goals; 95 percent of all students and 95 percent of students in each subgroup must take the assessment. In 2006, Kentucky was approved by the US Department of Education to report 2006 NCLB results based on the **Wellstone Amendment** which requires that two years of test data (2005 & 2006) be averaged and that the total number of students taking the test in both years be of sufficient size as described above. This allowed Kentucky to base Adequate Yearly Progress decisions on the grades where two years of data existed (Reading at 4, 7 and 10 and Mathematics at 5, 8 and 11).

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CATS AND NCLB: NCLB has a goal of 95percent participation in testing. However, Kentucky regulation requires that all students enrolled at the time of testing participate. A very small number of students each year are exempted for medical reasons. CATS includes a “0” score for each student who does not take the test and is not legally exempted.

3. Meeting goals for an “other academic indicator;” high schools must make progress or meet goals toward improving graduation rates; elementary and middle schools must have a prior year CATS classification of meeting goal or progressing or if in assistance must grow at or above the state average for schools with the same grade configuration. Graduation rates and accountability index scores from the previous year are used because this data is not available in time for August reporting.

Other provisions:

- **Full academic year:** In calculating AYP for schools and districts, states can only use the assessment scores of students enrolled in a school and district for a full academic year, defined as any 100 days of attendance during the school year from the first day of school until the first day of the testing window. Students enrolled in a school less than 100 days but enrolled in the district for 100 days are included in district accountability calculations. This is the basis for accountability for CATS as well.
- **Limited English proficient student (LEP)** scores count for AYP but on a prescribed time frame. In their first year, these students must take an English proficiency exam and that participation rate is used in place of the reading score. They must also take the math exam. In the second year they must take all exams except the writing portfolio, which is not required until the third year.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CATS AND NCLB: CATS uses the NCLB rules which require states to define a full academic year to determine which students count. This must be applied in the same way to transient students and students whose primary language is not English. Many transient students who move frequently are no longer counted for school accountability, but they are reported in state results if they stay in Kentucky. If they stay in the same district, they are included in district accountability. Under CATS, students whose primary language is not English had been given a full two years to master English before being tested. Now, in their first year they are tested in math and an English proficiency exam and in their second year all other subjects except writing.

- **Students with Special Needs:** Under NCLB schools may not exclude students with disabilities from the accountability system. Most students with disabilities complete the same test as their peers. However, some are given more time or the use of technology to assist specific needs. Schools may use alternate standards and measures for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities but may identify no more than one percent of their students for these alternate standards.
- **Setting Targets:** States have flexibility in determining how to set targets for each year with the goal of 100 percent of students reaching proficiency by 2013-2014. The regulations allowed states to set starting points, measurable objectives, and intermediate goals by grade span. Kentucky chose to set different starting points for elementary, middle and high school as follows. The starting points for annual measurable objectives (AMO) are the percents of students scoring proficient or higher:
 - ✓ Elementary: reading - 47.27 percent
 math – 22.45 percent
 - ✓ Middle schools: reading – 45.60 percent
 math - 16.49 percent
 - ✓ High schools: reading – 19.26 percent
 math - 19.76 percent
- The AMO for Kentucky schools for each year through 2013-14 can be found in the Department's NCLB Briefing Packet. Search for NCLB Briefing Packet at <http://www.education.ky.gov>

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CATS AND NCLB: CATS gives each school its own starting point, based on beginning or baseline scores. NCLB requires all schools to use the same starting point based on whether they are an elementary, middle or high school.

- Confidence intervals are used in determining whether schools meet their reading and math targets. Schools falling within the 99 percent confidence interval, or margin of error band, meet their objective.
- **Reporting Timeframe.** States must identify schools for improvement prior to the beginning of the school year so parents have time to consider school choice options. All data for NCLB is available in early August.

Consequences under No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

NCLB Improvement Schools: A Title I school becomes an NCLB Improvement School if it fails to make AYP two years in a row in the same content area. Title I schools identified as NCLB Improvement Schools are subject to a series of consequences. Each year a school continues to be an improvement school, additional consequences are added. NCLB Improvement Schools continue in that category until they have met AYP two years in a row.

Tier 1 (first year of consequences, two years not making AYP)

- ✓ *Parent Notification*: notification to parents in schools identified for NCLB improvement as to the reason for identification, what the school is doing to improve, what KDE and the district are doing to improve the school, how parents can be involved
- ✓ *School Choice*: all students have the option of transferring to another public school in their district, priority is given to the lowest achieving students from low income families, the district pays for transportation
- ✓ *School must revise its school improvement plan* and include: research based strategies, practices to improve core subjects and parent involvement, extended school activities, use of ten percent of Title I money for professional development, teacher-mentoring

Tier 2 (three years not making AYP)

- ✓ *Tier 1 consequences plus: Supplemental Educational Services*: low income students attending a school identified as an NCLB Improvement School may receive tutoring outside of the regular school day provided by state-approved providers or the district if it is not an improvement district

Tier 3 (four years not making AYP)

- ✓ *Tier 1 and 2 consequences plus: Corrective Action*: school district must take corrective action to improve teaching and learning

Tier 4 (five years not making AYP)

- ✓ *Tier 1, 2 and 3 consequences plus: Restructuring*: district must prepare a plan for alternative governance

Tier 5 (six years not making AYP)

- ✓ *Tier 1, 2, 3 and 4 consequences plus: Alternative Governance*: districts must implement the alternative governance plan to restructure the school

States and districts have flexibility in shaping the school improvement strategies and interventions for these schools.

School districts are also identified as meeting AYP or being improvement districts. NCLB improvement districts must revise their improvement plans, may request assistance from the state and may face corrective action.

Assuring a Fair System: Three committees were established in 1998 to provide guidance to the state board in developing CATS. They also provided guidance for compliance with No Child Left Behind. They include:

- **Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee (EAARS)**: an eight-member subcommittee of legislators, appointed by the Legislative Research Commission. Its responsibility is to review administrative regulations, advise the state board on the assessment and accountability system, and provide oversight for the Office of Education Accountability.
- **School Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability Council (SCAAC)**: a 17-member group representing educators, local board members, parents, business leaders, and the public, recommended by constituent groups and appointed by the governor. It is charged with studying, reviewing, making recommendations to and advising the Kentucky Board of Education and Legislative Research Commission on academic standards, communication with the public, assessment, accountability, and assistance to schools to improve learning.

- **National Technical Advisory Panel on Assessment and Accountability (NTAPAA):** appointed by the Legislative Research Commission and composed of no fewer than three testing experts. Its charge is to advise the Legislative Research Commission, the state board, and the Department of Education regarding assessment and accountability.
- In addition, the state board must also seek the advice of the **Office of Education Accountability.**

School Report Card

- An annual **school report card** is prepared for each school. CATS and NCLB require schools and school districts to produce these reports. CATS requires information on student academic achievement, attendance, retention, drop-out rates, student transition to adult life, and school learning environment including measures of parental involvement. Other items include: the school's mission statement and goals, enrollment, reports on state contests such as band, orchestra, chorus, and academic competitions, teacher qualifications, school safety information, spending per pupil, pupil/teacher ratio, and availability of technology. Indications of parent involvement include the number of parents attending parent-teacher conferences, voting in school council elections and serving on committees, and the number of parent volunteer hours. The school may report on extracurricular activities, awards, and recognitions. The names of school council members are also included. In addition, NCLB requires test scores broken out by subgroup. This data should be available in the expanded report card and on the department's Web site. (Search for "School Performance Reports at www.education.ky.gov.)
- Schools are required to mail report cards to families or get a waiver to distribute them in another way. They are also available on the parent section of the department's Web site. (See below for contact information.).
- Each school district must publish a **District Report Card**, a summary of all school data, in the newspaper with the largest circulation in the county.
- An **Expanded School Report Card** is also required by CATS and offers more detail about student performance data broken out by subgroup such as gender, race, and poverty, additional demographic data, and other information that schools want to share. This report must be available at the school and an **Expanded District Report Card**, providing more data and elements of the district's improvement plan, must be made available at the district office.

Other Points of Interest

- Kentucky **teachers** have a significant role in designing the system. Teachers create and/or review the test items, have input on revising Core Content and the Program of Studies, were responsible for creating and recommending performance standards to the state board, and had the opportunity to comment on the development of the CATS system through electronic mail.
- The Kentucky Board of Education has a Code of Ethics for Appropriate Testing Practices for School and District Personnel (**Administrative Code for Kentucky's Educational Assessment Program**) to give teachers guidelines for administering state assessments. Copies of the code are available from schools, the district assessment coordinator, the superintendent or from the Department of Education at (502) 564-4394. Concerns about inappropriate assessment practices

should be reported to the Department of Education at (502) 564-2983, or to the Office of Education Accountability at (800) 242-0520. Persons who call to report a concern do not have to give their name. However, it is more difficult for the state to follow up on anonymous reports.

- The department and state board must assist local districts in developing and using **continuous assessment strategies** that provide diagnostic information for students. The state releases test questions used in previous Kentucky Core Content Tests that schools may use for this purpose.

WHAT'S NEW?

→ Changes have been made in testing as follows:

- ✓ Beginning in 2006-07 students in grade eight and ten will take high school and college readiness exams (**EXPLORE AND PLAN**) as described above, replacing the norm-referenced tests given in those grades.
- ✓ Beginning in 2007-08, all students in grade 11 will be required to take the **ACT**, paid for by the state.
- ✓ Beginning in 2008 high school students in grades 10, 11 or 12 will have the option of taking the **WorkKeys** test, an exam to assess workplace readiness.
- ✓ All required testing had been administered in the spring. Now some testing will be given in the fall. (See chart page xx for details.)
- ✓ **Writing portfolio** requirements have been reduced to three items in grades four and seven and four items in grade 12. New rules require that portfolios be included as a component of literacy instruction and relate to standards-based units of study, students have choices in what they write about, schools spend a reasonable amount of time on portfolio pieces, schools may not offer classes that focus solely on portfolios, working portfolio folders must be sent with students if they move to another school, and teachers may not score the portfolios of their own students.
- ✓ **Kentucky Core Content Tests** will include fewer open response questions.
- ✓ **Practical Living/Vocational Studies** will be tested with multiple choice items only in grades 4, 7 and 10 (it had been administered in grades 5, 8 and 10) and on-demand writing will be tested in grades 5, 8 and 12 (it had been in grades 4, 7, and 12).
- ✓ **Reading and mathematics** will be tested in all grades 3 through 8.
- ✓ The Individual Graduation Plan is now called the **Individual Learning Plan** and may become part of the non-academic indicators for CATS.

→ In addition, NCLB is scheduled for reauthorization by Congress and changes may be made that could change what is required by federal law.

RESULTS

School Results: For CATS

- In the 2002-2004 accountability cycle, 650 schools met all CATS goals, 11 met learning goals but missed the dropout and novice reduction goals, 198 schools were in the “progressing” category, 48 schools were progressing but missed drop out and novice reduction goals, and 48 schools were in the assistance category. Of these, 16 were Level 1 schools, 16 were Level 2 and 16 were Level 3 with full scholastic audits required. The results for 2004-2006 will be released in late September 2006.

- The average school academic index in 2005 for elementary was 81.5, middle school 75.8 and high school 74.9. Schools at all levels have made progress but gaps in scores by subgroup continue to be unacceptable. Kentucky still has work to do to help all students reach proficiency.
- Since 1997 national **norm-referenced tests** have been given to students statewide in the last year of primary (formerly grade three) and grades six and nine to provide parents with information for comparing their child's scores with similar students around the nation. The reading, language arts, and mathematics survey editions of the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills/5 (CTBS/5) are used. The results of these tests are included in accountability scores for CATS. On this **norm-referenced** test, a student's results are compared to scores of a group of similar students who took the test in the spring of 1996 who set a national "norm." A score of 55 means the student did as well or better than 55 percent of the normed group. Average Kentucky scores have increased at all levels from 1997 to 2005. Elementary scores rose from 50 to 67; middle school from 50 to 57; and high school 48 to 54. Beginning in 2006, CTBS in grades six and nine will be replaced with EXPLORE and PLAN.
- The Kentucky Department of Education has reported that in general school audits show schools with low assessment scores have:
 - ✓ ineffective school councils
 - ✓ gaps in lesson planning and instruction
 - ✓ assessments that did not align with Kentucky goals
 - ✓ ineffective planning
 - ✓ an inability to use assessment data
 - ✓ no alignment of curriculum
 - ✓ professional development unrelated to the school plan
 - ✓ weak use of technology
 - ✓ weak leadership
 - ✓ low expectations for students and adults
 - ✓ a lack of parent involvement.
- On the opposite end of the scale, a sample group of successful schools was audited to see what they were doing to help all students achieve. This is what was found.
 - ✓ Teachers and principals from different grade levels and between schools talked to each other about curriculum.
 - ✓ The school staff and council carefully reviewed student achievement data to identify gaps in learning in curricular areas and gaps in achievement between different groups of students.
 - ✓ Teachers assess students in several different ways and review student work to identify learning gaps.
 - ✓ Teachers work together to align curriculum with core content to be sure all the core content is taught.
 - ✓ Schools work to be sure every student has equal access to a rich curriculum and schedules are flexible enough to support this policy.
 - ✓ Extended school services, federal programs, and family resource and youth services centers work together in effective ways to support student achievement.
 - ✓ School and district budgets are targeted in effective ways to support student learning.
 - ✓ Professional development is targeted toward student and school learning goals.

- ✓ Staff evaluations focus on improved teaching.
 - ✓ School leadership is strong.
 - ✓ Schools take consolidated planning seriously, taking school data into consideration.
- The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence completed a study of high-poverty high-performing schools in 2004. Results are listed on page 57.

Nonacademic results:

- In 2004-05, 6,522 students dropped out of high school, a rate of 3.49 percent, significantly less than the 5.53 percent in 1995. This data reported by gender and race for 1998-99 and 2002-03 is:

	<u>1998-99</u>	<u>2004-05</u>
✓ Male	5.86	4.09
✓ Female	4.09	2.87
✓ White	4.81	3.21
✓ African American	7.00	5.92
✓ Hispanic	7.20	5.24

- In 2004-05, 14,044 students in grades 4 through 12 were retained, or failed to pass on to the next grade. The rate of 3.30 percent decreased from 4.03 in 1998-99. Ninth grade students had the highest retention rate at 10.81 percent in 2004-05, a decrease from 12.55 percent in 1998-99. See the nonacademic briefing packet on the department of education Web site for more details. (Search for non academic indicators at www.education.ky.gov .)
- The percent of students enrolling in Kentucky colleges increased from 44.1 percent in 1993 to 48.4 percent in 2005 with out-of-state college enrollment decreasing from 5.7 percent in 1993 to 5.5 percent in 2005. In those same years the percent going on to school and work combined increased from 4.8 to 7.0 and the percent going to vocational/technical schools increased from 4.1 to 5.3.
- **Rewards** for schools meeting achievement goals have not been funded since 2002 when \$22.4 million was shared by 736 schools.

Results for No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

- In 2006:
 - ✓ 766 or 65.8 percent of Kentucky schools met all of their AYP goals
 - ✓ 398 schools did not make AYP
 - ✓ 88.9 percent of elementary schools met goals
 - ✓ 31.9 percent of middle schools met goals
 - ✓ 22.7 percent of high schools met goals
 - ✓ 80 of 176 or 45.5 percent of districts met goals

Because NCLB only reports the percent of students reaching proficiency, it is not an indicator of whether students and schools are making progress. Parents and citizens are encouraged to also look at Commonwealth Accountability Testing System reports to learn whether schools are successful in moving their students from novice to apprentice, as well as moving students to proficiency.

Other testing:

- The **National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)** is a standards-based test that provides national comparisons. It has been administered to a sample of Kentucky students in fourth and eighth grades in reading, writing, mathematics, and science. On the most recent tests Kentucky fourth and eighth grade students scored:
 - above the national average in reading (2005)
 - above the national average in writing (2002)
 - above the national average in science (2005)
 - below the national average in mathematics (2005).
- Kentucky students have made strong progress in reading, writing and science. In 2005, Kentucky was one of nine states that made significant gains in science in grade four and one of eleven states in grade eight. In mathematics scores have risen consistently in grade four but have stayed below the national average and scores were flat in the last two testing periods in grade eight and also stayed below the national average. For more information check the National Center for Education Statistics Web site at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states/>.
- The number of students taking the **American College Test (ACT)** in preparation for college increased from 62 percent of graduates in 1990 to 76 percent in 2006. The number of students taking the recommended core classes for college has grown from 28 percent in 1994 to 59.4 percent in 2006. These numbers will increase more dramatically when the ACT will be required for all eleventh grade students in 2007-08 and with increased high school graduation requirements in 2012. The average score (on a scale of 1 to 36) has increased since 2002 from 20.0 to 20.6 in 2006; in the nation it dropped from 21.0 in 2001 to 20.9 in 2004 and 2005, but increased in 2006 to 21.1.
- Increasing numbers of Kentucky students are taking advanced placement classes and exams and are scoring at higher levels. In 2006, 11,627 students took AP exams compared to 6,175 in 1999. In addition, more students are scoring at levels 3, 4, and 5 on a 5 point scale than in past years (6,951 in 2004, 7,545 in 2005 and 8,966 in 2006).
- In a summer 2004 report, “**The State of the Commonwealth Index,**” the Kentucky Long-Term Policy Research Center found that Kentucky has made more progress on 26 indicators of quality of life between 1990 and 2001 than all but seven other states. The researchers stated that progress in education and the economy accounted for the majority of progress with changes in education most dramatic.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- ✍ NCLB test results are given to schools and districts in early August. Final data for NCLB and CATS is released to schools in mid September and to the public two weeks later. Schools will receive scores broken out by gender, race, eligibility for free lunch, English as a second language, and special education.
- ✍ Expect ongoing conversations about how to **close achievement gaps** between different groups of students along with discussions about setting targets for and plans for reducing those gaps.
- ✍ **School report cards** are available each January.

- ✍ **Spring testing dates** for upcoming years are scheduled to begin as follows: April 23, 2007, April 21 2008. See the chart on page 6 for the subjects, grades, and type of assessments to be administered.
- ✍ **Fall testing dates** will be used for the first time in 2006. Twelfth grade writing will be assessed with on demand writing in November. Eighth grade students will take EXPLORE and tenth grade students will take PLAN in September.
- ✍ **Students with disabilities**, who meet certain requirements, participate in the alternate portfolio program or are given special assistance, as long as that assistance is prescribed in their individual education plan and used in instruction. For example, a student with an orthopedic handicap who physically cannot write or type but who has the mental capacity to take the test could have a scribe write answers dictated by the student.
- ✍ Expect students to be writing in all grades and subjects. Writing must be part of the curriculum in all grades to spread the responsibility for teaching writing to all teachers. **Portfolios** of student writing should be kept throughout each school year with the best pieces selected prior to submission of the final portfolio in the spring, in grades four, seven, and 12.
- ✍ Students will continue to get individual **report cards**. State law does not require state assessment scores to affect students' grades or ability to graduate, but local school boards may adopt policies requiring completion of these assessments for high school graduation. Some teachers may include portfolio or state assessment items in grading their students.
- ✍ **College entrance** officials are showing increased interest in student writing and problem solving. The University of Louisville uses the writing portfolio to determine placement for freshmen in college classes. **SAT and ACT** now include a writing component (as of 2005). The ACT writing component is optional. The SAT also focuses on problem-solving skills through open-ended mathematics questions, which require students to calculate their own responses and provide a rationale, similar to Kentucky's performance assessments.
- ✍ Watch for discussions about significant **changes in CATS** including electronic or online test-taking and removing some Kentucky Core Content questions that are covered by the ACT test.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Carefully review your school report card and expanded school report.** If there are gaps in achievement between different groups of students, volunteer to help as the school establishes targets for and plans to reduce those gaps.
- ★ **Attend** the public meetings required by SB 168 and intended to share school and district plans to close achievement gaps. Ask how parents can help to improve student achievement for all students.
- ★ **Visit** the national Just for the Kids Web site (www.just4kids.org) and/or Standard & Poors' (www.schoolresults.org) to compare your school assessment data with other similar schools. Use this as an additional factor in evaluating your school's progress.
- ★ **Get a copy** of *Testing in Kentucky Part I: The Assessment* and *Testing in Kentucky Part II: Accountability*, special publications from the Kentucky Department of Education. These publications are being updated (fall 2006). Call for more information. (502) 564-3421.

- ★ **Ask** to review your **Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP)**, to see what your school is doing to help all students improve academic achievement. Look to see how school assessment data has been used to plan for improved student learning.
- ★ **Make an appointment** with your child's teacher to discuss your child's progress on these assessments. **Remember**, one test is not sufficient to tell you how your child is doing. Ask to see results of all tests, samples of homework, portfolio items, and classroom work. Ask what strengths and weaknesses your child demonstrates in the classroom and what you can do to help.
- ★ **Talk** with students and teachers about portfolios. Ask if writing is being incorporated throughout the curriculum in all grades. Ask students in grades 4, 7 and 12 how they will decide what goes into their final portfolios.
- ★ If your school has a PTA/PTO/PTSA, **request** a program on assessment, curriculum and instruction, core content, or writing portfolios to help parents understand what to expect and how to help. If you do not have a PTA/PTO, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office at (502) 226-6607 for help.
- ★ **Recognize the contributions** of teachers and administrators. Let them know you appreciate the amount of work it takes to adjust instruction and curriculum to help students acquire the skills needed to meet Kentucky's learning standards. Changing classroom practices requires teachers and administrators to think differently about what they do, and it takes time and effort.
- ★ **Write** to your elected officials with specific examples of successes or difficulties with the state assessment program. See page 103 to learn how to contact state legislators.
- ★ **Attend** local school council and school board meetings and ask about plans to address achievement gaps between different groups of students.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Association of School Councils**, (859) 238-2188 or www.kasc.net for Core Content Cards and good information in the free downloads section
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Assessment and Accountability**, (502) 564-2256 or visit the Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov>
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849, Lexington area or (800) 928-2111; email: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/>.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- Kentucky school districts are required to offer developmentally-appropriate **early childhood programs** for four-year-old children at risk of educational failure and three- and four-year-old children with disabilities. State funds are used to support these **Kentucky Preschool Programs**.
- To participate as a four-year-old at-risk student, a child must be eligible for the federal free lunch program or live in a family whose income is at 150 percent of the poverty level or less. Any child who is three or four years old, who has a disability, may participate regardless of family income. Based on local policy, other children may enroll if space is available.
- School districts must work with other preschool programs, such as Head Start, to avoid duplication and serve as many four-year-old children as possible.
- **KIDS NOW, a comprehensive early childhood initiative** passed by the General Assembly in 2000, focuses on maternal and child health, supporting families, and enhancing early care and education programs. The Division of **Early Childhood Development** in the Department of Education, directs implementation of KIDS Now, focusing on the needs of Kentucky's youngest children from birth through the early elementary years.
- **Vision exams** are required for three- to six-year-old children before they enroll for the first time in school, public preschool, or Head Start. This is in addition to required immunizations and health, growth and hearing screenings.
- Kentucky has established **early childhood standards** that identify the critical knowledge and skills learned in the early years. They describe the range that can be observed in young children, with and without disabilities, from birth to five years of age. The standards are designed as a framework to assist parents, early care and education professionals, administrators, and others in understanding what children know and are able to do. *Kentucky's Early Childhood Standards* can be found on the Kentucky Department of Education Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Default.htm> (search for Early Childhood Standards).
- Preschool teachers must be certified with a teacher's certificate in Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education (IECE) or have a letter of exemption to be newly hired to teach in state-funded preschool programs. They must be paid on the certified salary scale. Classified teachers may remain in their current position but they may not be hired in another district without holding the IECE certification. (Effective 2004)
- Kentucky has developed a child care quality rating system called **STARS for KIDS NOW** that can be used by child care providers to improve and demonstrate the quality of their programs and by parents as they select programs for their children. A rating of one to four stars indicates program quality with four as the highest level. The program is optional.

OTHER PROGRAMS

- **Head Start** is a program funded by the federal government that provides comprehensive child development services (preschool education, health services, health, dental and mental health screening and follow up, parent involvement training, and social services) for three- and four-year-old children who come from families whose incomes meet federal guidelines for poverty. Children with disabilities may also be eligible. Thirty-two Head Start programs serve 14,342 three- and four-year-old children in all 120 counties in Kentucky.
- **Early Head Start** programs, begun in 1995, provide services to infants and toddlers as well as expectant mothers. There are twelve programs in Kentucky and it is hoped that this program will expand to serve more areas of the state in the near future.
- **Even Start** is a federally funded program that focuses on literacy services for families at risk and children ages birth through seven whose parents are eligible for adult education. There are 33 counties in Kentucky offering adult education, parent education and support, and early child development. Grants for the program come through the Department of Education. Call (502) 564-7056 for more information.
- **Early Reading First** is a federal grant program focused on preparing preschool children for reading and literacy. Local school districts can apply for these grants in collaboration with other agencies in their communities. Two Kentucky counties have been awarded Early Reading First grants.
- State-funded **Family Literacy Programs** are available in all 120 counties and focus on children ages birth through high school and their families. The statewide program is funded with state dollars through the Department for Adult Education and Literacy. For more information, call (502) 564-5114.
- The **Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy (KIFL)** was established to improve and expand family literacy services in Kentucky. It is the result of an effort among several agencies including the National Center for Family Literacy, Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Workforce Development, Governor's Office, and the Kentucky Department of Education using federal, state, and local funds. The Institute is managed by the National Center for Family Literacy in Louisville. It has a resource center and provides professional development and training to local family literacy programs and partners. Family literacy services are available in every county either through adult education or Even Start programs. For more information call (502) 584-1133 x184 or visit <http://www.famlit.org/kifl/>.
- **First Steps: Kentucky's Early Intervention System**, funded through state and federal dollars serves children ages birth to three whose development in communication, movement, learning, social growth, emotional growth, and adaptability is delayed. For more information call (800) 442-0087.
- **The Child Care Resource and Referral Network** is a group of 14 regional agencies that help parents find local child care services, connects eligible families to the child care subsidy program, and provides training for early care and education professionals. For the agency closest to you, contact the Kentucky partnership for Early Childhood Services at (800) 956-8950 or www.kentuckypartnership.org/ccrr/.

WHAT'S NEW?

- The 2006 General Assembly provided additional funding for Kentucky preschool programs for the first time in many years. There will be \$23.5 million more in 2006-07 and 2007-08 for a total of \$75.1 million each year to help cover rising costs and to serve children whose family income is at or below 150 percent of the poverty level, up from 130 percent in previous years. This means another 750-1000 children will be eligible and school districts will have more funding to cover their costs.
- The Kentucky Department of Education, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, and Kentucky's many early childhood partners has created Building a Strong Foundation for School Success Series, for teachers, administrators and parents that includes the following items:
 - ✓ **Parent Guides for Kentucky's Early Childhood Standards (Birth to Three and Three and Fours)** have been published and distributed to providers across the state who work with families with children birth through age four.
 - ✓ **A Kentucky Early Childhood Continuous Assessment Guide** has been developed to be used by early childhood providers to measure a child's progress on the Early Childhood Standards.
 - ✓ **A Quality Self-Study** is available for early childhood program staff to help them evaluate their own program and classrooms.

They are available to download at www.kidsnow.ky.gov. Questions about the series can be addressed to Division of Early Childhood Development 502-564-8341.

- **Starting Strong** is a program that the Prichard Committee has adapted from its Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership for parents of preschool children. The program brings parents and early education and care teachers and administrators together for three days of training to build partnerships to improve outcomes for young children. For more information call 800-928-2111 ext. 232.





RESULTS

- All of Kentucky's 175 school districts provide preschool services. Many districts offer preschool programs in conjunction with Head Start and other programs listed above.
- In 2004-05, 36,526 children were served by Kentucky's preschool program and Head Start. This number includes 13,429 three- and four-year-old children with a diagnosed disability or delay and 23,097 four-year-old children who were eligible based on income. Many districts enroll children whose family income does not meet the guidelines but is insufficient to afford tuition. Other families pay tuition for their children to attend.
- A multi-year research study on the state's preschool program, begun in 1991 by the University of Kentucky, demonstrated that the program is reducing the achievement gap between at-risk children and their classmates. The Kentucky Preschool Program produces similar positive outcomes for all groups of children regardless of their race or gender. Findings indicate that the Kentucky Preschool Program has a positive effect on children's development during preschool, their readiness for kindergarten, and their social and academic progress through the grade five. Middle school surveys indicate that children who attend the preschool program continue to do as

well and in some cases better than a random group of their peers. A follow up study tracking assessment scores, attendance and other measures is underway with results expected in the summer of 2007.

- State funding had not kept up with preschool enrollment and needs until 2006-07. The state per child allocation had decreased from \$2,285 in 1992-93 to \$2,241 in 2003-04 but was increased to \$3,168 for 2006-07.
- As of December 2005, 500 early care centers and 140 families who provide child care in their homes, were participating in the voluntary STARS for KIDS NOW program. These providers are working to improve the quality of their programs.
- Since the Folic Acid program was implemented as part of KIDS NOW, the number of babies born with neural tube defects like spina bifida, has been decreased by 34 percent. Folic Acid is a dietary supplement (like a vitamin) that is needed for a baby's healthy development very early in pregnancy. This program has worked to inform young women of child-bearing age about the need to take folic acid before and during pregnancy and provides folic acid in a multi-vitamin to women of child bearing age.

WHAT TO EXPECT

-  Students identified as at-risk who attend preschool programs should do as well as other children in student performance measures.
-  Any young child with disabilities or whose development is delayed should be eligible for one of the many programs available.
-  Parent involvement should be an important part of early childhood programs.
-  Research on brain development in the first years of a child's life is being widely shared in an effort to encourage more parents to learn how to help their child's development.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Learn more** about early childhood development by getting the *Kentucky Early Childhood Standards*, the *Parent Guide to the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards* and the "Building a Strong Foundation for School Success Series" at www.kidsnow.ky.gov or call 502-564-8341.
- ★ **Promote** the importance of early childhood programs by getting a copy of the six-part series, *Early Childhood*, prepared by the Partnership for Successful Schools for the *Lexington Herald-Leader*. Also ask for the series, *Successful Learning* and *Healthy Babies*. Share them with your local paper or other civic newsletters. See below for contact information.
- ★ **Call** the Prichard Committee and ask about **Starting Strong** to see if there is a program that you and your child's early care teachers could attend.
- ★ If you have a child attending an early child education program in Kentucky, ask if they participate in the STARS for KIDS NOW program. If they are not, suggest that they explore the possibility with the child care facility.

- ★ If you have a child or know of children who might be eligible for these programs, call your **local board of education** office or the offices listed below for more information.
- ★ If you are concerned that a child ages birth to three years is not developing normally, **make a referral** to First Steps by calling the statewide toll free number, 1-800-442-0087.
- ★ **Visit** preschool, Head Start, Early Head Start, Even Start, or First Steps for Family Independence programs in your community.
- ★ If teachers in your program are conducting home visits to their students, **ask** how these visits help prepare children for school.
- ★ If your school has a PTA/PTO, **find out** what it can do to support preschool programs and the families of children who will be entering your primary school. Suggest a mentoring or partnering program for preschool parents or a program that provides preschool children with materials in the summer to prepare them for learning.
- ★ **Invite a speaker to your school or civic club.** Speakers are available to talk about brain research and the importance of quality child care and schooling in infancy and early childhood. Contact the Department of Education's Early Childhood Branch for information at (502) 564-7056.
- ★ **Volunteer** to help a teacher in a preschool program. Offer to read to children.
- ★ **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask school board members how the programs are working in your district and whether every eligible child is being served.
- ★ **Write** or call your elected officials with specific examples of successes and challenges. See page 103 for information on contacting state legislators.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies**, Kentucky Partnership for Early Childhood Services, (800) 956-8950 or www.kentuckypartnership.org/ccrr/
- **Department for Adult Education and Literacy**, (502) 564-5114.
- **First Steps**, (502) 564-2154 or visit the Web site at <http://chs.ky.gov/publichealth> (scroll down to First Steps)
- **Head Start Collaboration Office**, (502) 564-8341.
- **Kentucky Department of Education:**
 - **Early Childhood Branch/Preschool**, (502) 564-7056 or visit the Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Default.htm> and search for preschool.
 - **Early Child Development (KIDS NOW)**, (502) 564-8341.
 - **Even Start/Family Literacy**, Early Childhood Branch, (502) 564-7056.
- **Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy**, (502) 584-1133 x184.
- **National Center for Family Literacy**, (502) 584-1133.
- **Partnership for Successful Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.partnershipforsuccessfulschools.org>
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, Starting Strong**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/> or www.cipl.org.

PRIMARY SCHOOL

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- Kentucky law requires schools to create **primary school programs** for all students kindergarten through grade three.
- The law lists the following **critical attributes** in further defining primary school:
 - ✓ **developmentally-appropriate educational practices** or teaching in ways children learn best according to their age and development
 - ✓ **multiage and multiability classrooms** or having children of different ages and abilities working together
 - ✓ **continuous progress** or allowing children to work and progress at their own pace, not having to wait for other children to catch up or be pressured because other children are waiting for them
 - ✓ **authentic assessment** or the ongoing documentation of what students actually learn and do in their day-to-day activities
 - ✓ **qualitative reporting methods** or letting parents know what students know and can do in a way that focuses on the growth and development of the whole child
 - ✓ **professional teamwork** or teachers and other staff members working together to help students learn
 - ✓ **positive parent involvement** or involving parents in positive ways to support student learning
- In a **primary school program**, the curriculum matches the individual student's ability without regard to a specific grade level. The program is intended to help **all** students progress at their own pace. That includes children who are gifted, have learning differences or disabilities, are at risk for educational failure, or have no identified special learning needs.
- School councils (or the school if no council exists) determine the organization of the ungraded primary program including the extent to which multiage groups are necessary. This organization must be based on the critical attributes and the needs of individual students, including the special needs of first year, half-day (kindergarten) students. Changes in the law since 1992 have not altered the basic structure of the primary program or discontinued any of the seven attributes that are critical to implementation of the program.
- School districts are required to collect data on the number of students who take five years to complete the primary program and report it in the annual Demographic Survey. This information is included in the School Report Card.

WHAT'S NEW?

- ➔ Additional funding will be provided for professional development and a focus on improving reading and mathematics instruction.
- ➔ The state will provide full-day funding for a child five years old or younger, who has mastered academic and social kindergarten skills and should be enrolled in the full-day program to meet their educational needs. This provision was added by the legislature in 2006.

RESULTS

- **Reading Scores:** Test results on the reading portion of the Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT) have risen from 78.9 in 1999 to 87.1 in 2005. The Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) for students at the end of the primary program (formerly grade three) on reading show gains from an average of 50 in 1997 to 65 in 2005. Average fourth grade scores in reading on the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) have risen from 213 in 1992 which was two points below the national average to 220 in 2005, three points above the national average. This may be a result of state and national emphasis on reading programs with supporting funds.
- **Mathematics Scores:** Test results in mathematics on the KCCT in grade five have risen from 57.7 in 1999 to 74.4 in 2005; CTBS scores have risen from 49 in 1997 to 67 in 2005; NAEP scores for fourth grade students have risen from 215 in 1992 which was 4 points below the national average to 231 in 2005 which is 6 points below the national average.
- An in-depth study of Kentucky primary programs conducted by the University of Kentucky, the Institute of Education Reform and the Kentucky Department of Education, *Characteristics and Attributes of Primary Programs and Practices*, was published February 2003. Following are some of its findings. Primary teachers in high performing and effective classrooms used more developmentally appropriate practices including:
 - ✓ promoting autonomy and responsibility in students;
 - ✓ promoting active learning;
 - ✓ using more hands-on materials;
 - ✓ including children in choices;
 - ✓ prompting children to discuss and explain their thinking;
 - ✓ supporting children in transition from one activity to another;
 - ✓ using more computer-based instruction;
 - ✓ engaging in extracurricular activities related to arts and humanities;
 - ✓ using systematic programs for addressing discipline and guidance issues;
 - ✓ individualizing instruction with support from parent volunteers, peer buddies, and strategies to address multiple intelligences;
 - ✓ using a greater diversity of student evaluation strategies.

In addition, they:

- ✓ were providing more hours of paid planning, professional development and professional teamwork time;
- ✓ were more likely to have families involved in events dealing with transitions from preschool to primary and primary to grade four;
- ✓ were more likely to be involved by their principal in school-wide activities or responsibilities and were encouraged to assume responsibility for committee work or professional issues; and
- ✓ reported a greater number of children identified with learning disabilities and were knowledgeable about the IEP objectives of their students.

Primary teachers in low performing schools:

- ✓ used fewer hands-on materials;
- ✓ engaged in conversations that were more teacher directed with one-answer or memorized-answer questions;
- ✓ used ineffective classroom transitions;
- ✓ used more punitive discipline strategies (suspension and expulsion);
- ✓ had to purchase their own materials more often;
- ✓ had fewer health and safety resources available in their classrooms;
- ✓ were more likely to use observation as the primary form of student evaluation;
- ✓ were more likely to be involved by their principal in bus duties;
- ✓ were less knowledgeable about IEP objectives for students in their classrooms.

Teachers in this study identified eight characteristics that contribute to effective primary programs including: attitudes and dispositions, individualization (working to meet unique needs of each student), sound teaching strategies, high quality teachers and staff, active family involvement, discipline and guidance, leadership and communication.

- Researchers say the implementation of the primary program varies widely from school to school and classroom to classroom. Some teachers have implemented more of the seven critical attributes, and some have implemented them better than others. According to the Primary Demographic Survey conducted by the Department of Education, in 2002-03 about 47 percent of elementary schools have gone back to separate classes for kindergarten through grade three and about 42 percent combine two age groups of students. About two percent combine all four age groups in multiage classrooms.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- ✎ After many years of working to help every student reach Kentucky's learning standards, unacceptable gaps in achievement between various groups of students persist. Kentucky's Senate Bill 168 and the federal No Child Left Behind Law require schools to focus on closing those gaps. (See Assessment and Accountability beginning on page 1.) Expect to see school councils review school assessment data more closely and focus on curriculum and instruction to see that every child succeeds.
- ✎ Each elementary school must implement the primary school program including all of the seven critical attributes. Because there is flexibility in how students are grouped, parents may notice wide variations from classroom to classroom, and school to school. As teachers and school councils work to improve student achievement, they may make adjustments to improve teaching and learning.
- ✎ Classrooms look different from the classrooms most adults experienced.
 - ✓ Tables or desks are moved together, when appropriate, so children can work in small groups.
 - ✓ Children may change groups frequently to meet their own learning needs.
 - ✓ Hands-on material is used to help children learn academic skills and concepts.
 - ✓ Reading areas are arranged where children might sit on the floor or on comfortable furniture.
 - ✓ Students talk together and share things they are learning.
 - ✓ Students are writing more.

- ✓ Learning centers are created around the basics of science, social studies, and so on.
 - ✓ Children cooperate and work with each other in addition to working on their own individual assignments.
 - ✓ Report cards look different and are more detailed.
 - ✓ Children are encouraged to read lots of books; textbooks may be used less.
- ✎ Some schools are using the **Kentucky Early Learning Profile (KELP)**, a list of skills students should master in the primary program, as a guide and a report for parents. It is available on the department's Web site.
- ✎ Some schools have purchased a curricular program called **Different Ways of Knowing (DWoK)** which meets state guidelines and helps develop the primary program.
- ✎ Many schools qualify for and have received special reading grants to assist struggling readers.
- ✎ Decisions about when individual children should make the transition into fourth grade are made when parents, primary teachers, and fourth grade teachers meet to discuss their expectations about what children should know and be able to do. Some students may need to spend less than four years in primary, and some students may need an additional year. Schools use the **Successful Completion of the Primary School Program** document to guide them in assuring that all students who leave the primary program are prepared for fourth grade work. This is available on the department's Web site.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ If you have a child in the primary program, arrange to visit the classroom to observe what is happening. Attend parent-teacher conferences and ask how your child is progressing, what his or her goals are for the year, what you can expect students to learn, and how you can help.
- ★ Ask to see a copy of your school's curriculum, primary policy, and the Successful Completion of the Primary School Program. Ask how the school is working to assure that when students leave the primary program they have the skills needed for fourth grade.
- ★ If your child needs another year in the primary program, ask what instructional strategies will be used to ensure your child will be ready to enter fourth grade.
- ★ If you have a preschool child, attend information sessions about the primary program and make arrangements to visit during the school year.
- ★ Share a copy of *Characteristics and Attributes of Primary Programs and Practices* with your school council, available from the Kentucky Department of Education. (See below.)
- ★ Inform other parents about the primary school program by obtaining copies of newspaper ads developed by the Partnership for Successful Schools and sharing them with other parents. See below for contact information.
- ★ Request information about *One-to-One: Practicing Reading with Students*, a training program designed to support volunteer efforts in elementary schools, available from the Partnership for Successful Schools. See below for contact information.

- ★ If you have a PTA/PTO, **ask for or plan a program** to help parents understand primary school programs. If you do not have a PTA/PTO, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office for help at (502) 226-6607.
- ★ **Encourage** the PTA/PTO, parents, and community to help teachers supply their primary classrooms with a variety of materials for learning and **volunteer** as teacher's aide or tutor.
- ★ **Recognize** the contributions of teachers and administrators. Let them know you appreciate their work in primary school programs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Department of Education, Early Childhood/Primary School Program** at (502) 564-3064 and visit the Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/> and search for primary program
- **Partnership for Successful Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Web site at <http://www.partnershipforsuccessfulschools.org/>.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/>.

READING PROGRAMS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- The **Read to Achieve Program** was established during the 2005 legislative session. This Reading Diagnostic and Intervention program is a competitive grant that provides funds to schools to implement research-based reading diagnostic assessment to all primary students and intervention programs to those students identified as struggling readers. The early reading intervention program selected by a funded school must be based on reliable, replicable research and offer short-term intensive one-on-one or small group instruction in essential skills necessary for reading proficiency. Services to struggling readers in the primary years are provided by a highly trained, certified teacher specifically hired to provide intervention services. Currently, 312 schools have **Read to Achieve** grants.
- The **Kentucky Reading First Grant Program** was authorized under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The purpose of the program is to ensure that each child is a successful, proficient reader by the end of the primary (K-3) by incorporating the five essential components of reading instruction into the reading program. Those components are phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, fluency, and comprehension.
- The **Collaborative Center for Literacy Development: Early Childhood through Adulthood** was created in 1998 to promote reading skills. It is a partnership between the eight state universities, the National Center for Family Literacy, the Kentucky Department of Education, the Department of Adult Education and Literacy, and other agencies that are involved in and support literacy, language development, and reading. Some of its duties include developing a clearinghouse for literacy information, collaborating with colleges and universities in literacy training, helping districts with students who have poor reading skills, and providing professional development. The Center, located at the University of Kentucky, is also responsible for research and evaluation of early reading models implemented by local schools and districts.
- The **Kentucky Reading Project**, created by the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development, provides regional training institutes for elementary school teachers with a special focus on reading instruction. Institutes are held across the state each summer for elementary teachers. Nine different groups were trained in the summer of 2006.
- The Kentucky Department of Education, in conjunction with the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development, provides information on **successful research-based reading models** and strategies for implementing such programs. The department must also present a report to the legislature's Interim Joint Committee on Education by September 1 of each year.
- In 2000, the legislature passed a comprehensive **adult literacy** bill requiring the Council on Postsecondary Education, in partnership with the Department for Adult Education and Literacy, to create a mission and develop a 20-year strategy to raise the knowledge and skill level of and ensure lifelong learning opportunities for adults in Kentucky. Family literacy services are included in this plan.

RESULTS

- **Reading Scores:** Test results for elementary schools on the reading portion of the Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT) have risen from 78.9 in 1999 to 87.1 in 2005. The Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) for students at the end of the primary program (formerly grade three) on reading show gains from an average of 50 in 1997 to 65 in 2005. Average fourth grade scores in reading on the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) have risen from 213 in 1992 which was two points below the national average to 220 in 2005, three points above the national average. This may be a result of state and national emphasis on reading programs in elementary grades with supporting funds.
- The General Assembly provided a significant increase in funds for **Read to Achieve** including \$20.6 million in 2006-07 and \$23.6 million in 2007-08. (Funding in 2005-06 was \$11.1 million.) Currently 313 schools have Read to Achieve funds. This program serves elementary schools.
- High school reading scores have improved but not as dramatically as elementary and middle schools. CATS reading scores for high schools rose from an academic index to 63.6 in 1999 to 77.5 in 2005. High schools are beginning to pay more attention to reading levels of ninth-grade students and providing assistance to help them improve reading skills.
- Kentucky will receive \$89 million dollars, over six years (2003 through 2009) to fund the **Kentucky Reading First** subgrants to 73 schools in 42 districts. These federal funds are being used for implementation of comprehensive reading programs in elementary schools. After two years of implementation in Kentucky, a larger number of primary school students were reading at Kentucky benchmarks.
- **The Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy** is an initiative of the National Center for Family Literacy focused on improving the literacy of Kentuckians across the lifespan through professional development, awareness, resource development and partnerships. The Institute works with programs in every county that provide adult education for parents, parenting education and interactive literacy activities for parents and children ages birth - 18. For a complete list of literacy programs in Kentucky, or to browse the 2,300-volume Family Literacy Resource Center, go to www.familit.org/kifl.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Read** to your children and grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and neighbor children. Get in the habit of taking them to your local library on a regular basis. **Talk** with students and parents about the importance of reading. **Give** books as gifts to children.
- ★ **Ask** for copies of *Put Reading First: Helping Your Child Learn to Read*, a guide for parents of preschool through grade 3 students, available from the National Institute for Literacy. Distribute them to parents in your school or schedule a school meeting and have a conversation about what parents can do. Go to publications at <http://www.nifl.gov/>
- ★ **Volunteer** at your local school to read with students who need extra help. Contact the Kentucky PTA to learn about and set up a *Rock and Read* program to involve senior citizens in reading with children. See below for contact information.

- ★ **Request** information about *One-to-One: Practicing Reading with Students*, a volunteer training program designed to support reading in elementary schools, available from the Partnership for Successful Schools. See below for contact information.
- ★ **Visit** the Partnership for Successful Schools Web site and find copies of their ads on reading and writing prepared for the *Lexington Herald-Leader*. Share them with parents in your school. See below for Web site.
- ★ **Help set up a parent/child book club** at your school or in your neighborhood for students in grades three and above, to encourage reading and discussing books together.
- ★ **Ask** about reading scores at your middle and high schools. Ask how the school is helping students who are not reading on grade level.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Collaborative Center for Early Literacy Development**, University of Kentucky, (859) 257-6734; <http://www.kentuckyliteracy.org/>
- **Kentucky Adult Education**, Council on Postsecondary Education; (502) 573-5114; 800-928-7323; <http://adulthood.state.ky.us> .
- **Kentucky Congress of Parents and Teachers**, (502) 226-6607.
- **Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education**, (502) 573-1555.
- **Kentucky Department of Education**, (800) 533-5372 or visit the Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Default.htm>
 - **Division of Curriculum Development**, (502) 564-2106, Read to Achieve and elementary, middle and high school reading specialists.
 - **Reading First**, 502-564-7056 or visit the Web site: <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Instructional+Resources/Literacy/Kentucky+Reading+First/default/htm>.
- **Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy**, (502) 584-1133 x184, www.familit.org/kifl.
- **National Center for Family Literacy**, (502) 584-1133, <http://www.familit.org/>
- **National Institute for Literacy**, ED Pubs, P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398, (800) 228-8813, fax (301) 470-1244, e-mail: edpuborders@edpubs.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.nifl.gov/>.
- **Partnership for Successful Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.partnershipforsuccessfulschools.org/>.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/>.

EXTENDED SCHOOL SERVICES



THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- Extended school services (ESS) are designed to provide **additional instruction to help struggling learners** succeed in school. These services take place outside the regular school day with one exception. School districts may request permission through a waiver process from the Kentucky Board of Education to use ESS funds for programs during the school day.
- The Extended School Services program is primarily intended to be an intervention model, to help students when they need it, not wait until they have fallen behind. Students who have already fallen behind may receive remedial assistance. Sometimes an accelerated approach can help these students catch up with peers.
- Each school district is required to provide extended school services to meet student learning needs and receives state monies for this program.
- Extended School Service programs take many forms including after-school instruction, evening sessions, Saturday activities, daytime programs, or summer programs. Times may vary, depending on student needs. Support services such as transportation should be provided as necessary.
- Eligibility for these programs is determined by the district, based on students' needs for additional time to meet performance goals of the regular classroom. Districts should see that students with the greatest need are referred and served first. ESS cannot be used to discipline students.

RESULTS

- Most school districts offer summer-school and after-school programs with ESS funds.
- Over 600 schools had daytime ESS programs during the 2005-06 school year. Most programs focused on reading and math and provided immediate help for targeted students.
- Extended school services programs throughout the state served 163,406 students in the 2004-05 school year and 130,543 in the 2005-06 school year after having a 50 percent cut in funding. Full funding was restored for 2006-2007. Extended school services allow many students to advance to the next grade or graduate.
- The most common areas of study for students in the ESS programs are reading, writing, and mathematics.

WHAT TO EXPECT

-  Approximately \$32 million is available for ESS in 2006-07 and 2007-08.
-  Extended school services programs will continue to focus more on early intervention in major content areas. These funds can be used to provide supplemental instructional services to students in NCLB improvement schools.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Talk** with students and parents about how extended school services is being used to help struggling students and close gaps in achievement in your district.
- ★ **Ask** your school council members how extended school services fit into the comprehensive school improvement plan. Suggest a committee on extended school services and volunteer to be a member. Ensure that parents have a voice in how extended school services are provided.
- ★ If your school has a PTA/PTO/PTSA, **ask** how it can help support extended school services.
- ★ **Volunteer** to be a teacher's aide or tutor in an extended school services program.
- ★ **Be sure** your extended school services programs are instructional programs, not study halls.
- ★ If your district does not provide transportation for students in ESS, **encourage** your local board to do so.
- ★ **Write** to your elected officials with examples of successes and weaknesses in extended school services. See page 103 for information on contacting state legislators.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Department of Education, Extended School Learning Branch** at (502) 564-4772 or visit the Web site at www.education.ky.gov
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/>.

HIGH SCHOOLS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- The Kentucky Board of Education is responsible for establishing **graduation requirements** using the goals for students adopted by law. (See Goals inside back cover.) In 2006 the Board adopted new requirements that will begin with the class of 2012. (See chart pages 36-37.) Requirements were last changed beginning with the class of 2002.
- Pre-college curriculum requirements include minimum courses needed for college admission. This more rigorous curriculum includes foreign language, geometry, at least one lab course in science and more rigorous electives. (See chart pages 36-37.)
- The **Commonwealth Diploma Program**, begun in 1986, provides students with a special diploma for exceptional work in high school. Requirements include completion of state and local graduation requirements and the state's pre-college preparatory curriculum; a grade "C" or better in four Advanced Placement (AP) courses in English, foreign language, an elective, and mathematics or science; and completion of AP or International Baccalaureate (IB) examinations in three of the four required AP subject areas. Students who score at or above an established cut-off point can be reimbursed for the cost of taking the AP examinations. Some students have taken AP courses and received good grades but scored very low on the AP exam, suggesting that the AP course was not up to standards. Students and parents should ask about the history of grades and scores when they enroll in AP classes. There may be changes in the Commonwealth Diploma requirements in the next few years, so students pursuing this diploma need to work with school counselors to be sure they are aware of any changes.
- With regard to **advanced placement courses**, the following requirements have been established by law.
 - ✓ uniform criteria must be established for advanced placement courses
 - ✓ a core curriculum of no less than one course in at least four of six subjects (English, science, mathematics, social studies, foreign language and the arts) of advanced placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), dual enrollment or dual credit courses must be offered at all high schools; classes can be on-site or through Kentucky Virtual High School (KVHS) and probably through courses at colleges or universities
 - ✓ tuition and costs for students taking KVHS courses during the school day for credit must be paid by school districts
 - ✓ credits toward graduation and grades for calculating grade point averages (GPAs) for students who successfully complete courses through KVHS must be accepted by school districts and credits for high school graduation for students in grades five through eight who complete a KVHS course with an A or B or who score a 3 or higher on AP exams must be accepted

- ✓ college credit must be granted to students scoring a 3 or higher on AP exams from Kentucky public colleges and universities based on a Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) regulation. (Enacted in 2002.)
- Rules for high school-aged students taking the exam for a General Education Diploma (GED) changed in 2004. Students enrolled in a GED program operated or contracted by the school district or who obtain a GED by October 1 following their withdrawal from school will not be counted as a drop out. They must continue however, to participate in and be counted in their school's testing and accountability. Schools may work with students on obtaining a GED and continue to receive state funding for those students. However, school principals are strongly encouraged to use this option only when there are no other choices for students who want to leave school.

PLANNING FOR COLLEGE or WORK

- Students and their families need to plan ahead for college, vocational/technical school or work with regard to academic preparation and financial costs. Every student and his or her parents should begin working on their **Individual Learning Plan** with teachers and school counselors beginning in middle school. Goals and areas of career interest should be identified and high school classes selected with those future plans in mind as well as results of the EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT and Work Keys tests. (See What's New? below.) Students need to take high level classes to prepare themselves for education and work after high school.

In addition, families should begin early to plan for the cost of college or vocational/ technical school. The following programs can help.

- The Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education has developed a program called **Kentucky Go Higher** to support and encourage Kentucky students to get a good education. Its Web site, <http://www.gohigherky.org/> is a useful planning and information tool for students and parents.
- The **Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship Program (KEES)** uses lottery funds for student scholarships to Kentucky colleges, universities, and vocational programs. The amount students earn is based on their grade point average (GPA) each year of high school and their highest ACT test score. In calculating eligibility, advanced placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses are weighted on a five-point scale, meaning an A is worth 25 percent more than an A in a regular course. High schools are required to weight these courses before reporting GPAs to the state. The higher the GPA and ACT score, the more scholarship money a student earns with the maximum amount \$2,500 a year and the minimum \$125 for eligible students. High school counselors can provide students with more information. Students must maintain a satisfactory GPA in college to maintain their KEES grants.
- The **Kentucky Education Savings Plan Trust** allows families to save for college expenses. Contributions are tax-free until savings are withdrawn and then are taxed at a lower rate if used for qualified higher education expenses.

	Minimum High School Graduation Requirements (Through Class of 2011)		Minimum High School Graduation Requirements (Beginning with Class of 2012)	
SUBJECT	CREDITS	COURSES	CREDITS	COURSES
Language Arts	4	English I, II, III, IV	4	English I, II, III, IV (To include the content strands of reading, writing, speaking, listening, observing, inquiry, conventions, analysis, and using technology as a communication tool. Language arts shall be taken each year of high school.)
Social Studies	3	Credits to incorporate U.S. History, Economics, Government, World Geography and World Civilization	3	Credits to include the content strands of historical perspective, including U.S. History, Geography, Economics, Government and Civics, and Cultures and Societies
Mathematics	3	Algebra I, Geometry, and one elective	3	Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II (One mathematics course must be taken each year of high school to ensure readiness for postsecondary education or the workforce based on the student's individual learning plan. An integrated, applied, interdisciplinary or technical/occupational course that prepares a student for a career path based on the student's Individual Learning Plan may be substituted for a traditional Algebra I, Geometry or Algebra II course on an individual student basis if the course meets the content standards in the program of studies. Pre-Algebra shall not be counted as one of the three required Mathematics credits for high school graduation but may be counted as an elective.)
Science	3	Credits to include Life Science, Physical Science, and Earth and Space Science as provided in the Program of Studies	3	Credits shall incorporate lab-based scientific investigation experiences and include the content strands of biological science, physical science, earth and space science, and unifying concepts.
Health	1/2		1/2	Credit to include the content strands of individual well-being, consumer decision, personal wellness, mental wellness, and community services
Physical Education	1/2		1/2	Credit to include the content strands of personal wellness, psychomotor, and lifetime activity
Visual and Performing Arts	1	History and appreciation of visual and performing arts or a performing arts course which incorporates such content	1	History and appreciation of visual and performing arts or a performing arts course which incorporates such content (Credit to include the content strands of arts, dance, music, theatre, and visual arts or a standards-based specialized arts course based on the student's Individual Learning Plan.)
Foreign Language	0		0	
Electives	7		7	Academic and career interest standards-based learning experiences (to include four (4) standards-based learning experiences in an academic or career interest based on the student's Individual Learning Plan; and Demonstrated performance based competency in technology.)
Total	22		22	
Individual graduation plan which incorporates emphasis on career development			Individual graduation plan which incorporates emphasis on career development	

	Pre-College Curriculum Requirements (Kentucky Scholars Course of Study)		Commonwealth Diploma Requirements	
SUBJECT	CREDITS	COURSES	CREDITS	COURSES
Language Arts	4	English I, II, III, IV (or AP English) (Same as Pre-College Curriculum Requirements)	4	English I, II, III, IV (one AP English)
Social Studies	3 (3.5)	Same as High School (Choose from U.S. History – I; World History – I; World Geography – I; Economics – .5; Government – .5)	3	Same as High School
Mathematics	3	Algebra I, II and Geometry (Same as Pre-College Curriculum Requirements)	3	Algebra I or II, Geometry and one elective (one AP Science OR AP Mathematics)
Science	3	Same as High School plus at least one lab course (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)	3	Three credits to include Biology I or Chemistry I or Physics I and one elective (one AP Science or AP Mathematics)
Health	1/2	Same as High School	1/2	Same as High School
Physical Education	1/2	Same as High School	1/2	Same as High School
Visual and Performing Arts	1	Same as High School	1	Same as High School
Foreign Language	2	Credits required or demonstrated competency (effective fall 2004) (Same as Pre-College Curriculum Requirements)		One AP Course selected from Spanish, German, Latin or French (taking AP exam requires 4 units of French, German or Spanish and 3 units of Latin)
Electives	5	3 rigorous; one or more courses that develop computer literacy strongly recommended		Same as High School
Total	22	17 required; 5 elective		Successful completion of at least 22 approved units of credit, including all the Pre-college Curriculum Requirements Successful completion of at least four AP courses with a grade of C or better. Completion of AP exams in at least three of four AP courses.

- **Kentucky's Affordable Prepaid Tuition (KAPT)** program is intended to help Kentucky families afford college by guaranteeing the cost of tomorrow's tuition at today's prices. The Setting Aside for a Valuable Education (SAVE) Act, passed by the U.S. Congress in 2001, allows these investments to be tax free. Enrollment periods are limited so it is important to check the Web site or call to know when it is possible to sign up for this program. Visit www.getkapt.com or call 1-888-919-KAPT for more information. (Enacted in 2000.)
- **Kentucky's foster and adopted children** are eligible for free tuition and student fees in Kentucky's public colleges, universities, and technical and vocational schools. School counselors should be able to provide more information. (Enacted in 2001.)

WHAT'S NEW?

- ➔ Senate Bill 130, enacted in 2006, requires additional diagnostic testing to evaluate student's readiness for high school, college, technical schools or the workplace. Beginning in the fall of 2006, eighth grade students will take **EXPLORE**, a high school readiness exam and tenth grade students will take **PLAN**, a college readiness exam. Beginning in 2007-08, all eleventh grade students will take the **ACT**. All of these tests assess English, reading, mathematics and science. Schools are required to use results of these tests to provide guidance and assistance to students in preparing for postsecondary education or work. High school students whose ACT scores do not meet requirements for credit-bearing classes in college will be provided the opportunity to take accelerated classes in their areas of weakness and they may take the ACT a second time at the expense of the Kentucky Department of Education. Students who do well on these tests will be encouraged to take higher level classes to help them be well-prepared for school or work after high school.
- ➔ No later than the 2007-08 school year, students in grades 10, 11 or 12 will have the opportunity to take the **WorkKeys** assessment in reading for information, locating information and applied mathematics. Students meeting satisfactory scores will receive the appropriate "Kentucky Employability Certificate," which can be helpful with job applications. Students who do not perform at this level, shall be eligible for additional assistance. Information from all of these tests will be used to develop each student's Individual Learning Plan.
- ➔ House Bill 197 enacted in 2006 required the Kentucky Department of Education to pilot **end-of-course exams** for high school students in Algebra I, Algebra II and Geometry. End-of-course exams provide a consistent standard for coursework across the state, so schools could use them to judge the quality of their curriculum and instruction compared to state standards. These exams could also be used by students to demonstrate their competency in a subject for high school credit so that students can progress based on their performance rather than the amount of time they have spent in a particular class. A study of this pilot program must be conducted and reported to the legislature before end-of-course exams can be required.
- ➔ The Kentucky Board of Education adopted regulations that allow students to receive **credit for mastery of material**, not just seat time or time in the classroom. Some high schools are working on performance-based grading, allowing students to move at their

own pace and move ahead once they demonstrate that they have mastered the content for a class. This new rule will make it easier for those schools and their students to use performance-based programs.

- ➔ Many colleges and high schools have begun offering **dual credit classes** for high school students. In a dual credit class, a student earns both high school and college credit at the same time for the same course. The Kentucky Board of Education has appointed a task force to study dual credit opportunities and make policy recommendations to assure that students get the most benefit from these courses. The Board adopted regulations that protect high schools from losing ADA funding for students who take dual credit courses outside the high school building.

RESULTS




- The **high school graduation rate in Kentucky** continues to be too low and the dropout rate too high. In 2005, 6,522 students in dropped out of Kentucky high schools. According to the EPE Research Center only 69.7 percent of students entering ninth grade in Kentucky graduated four years later in 2003. (There are a number of ways to calculate graduation rates, all of which indicate rates that are unacceptable.) Students report dropping out of school for a wide range of reasons. They may be struggling academically, bored with school or in need of a job because of family circumstances. Many students who drop out report that they have made few or no connections with anyone at school – friends, teachers or groups with similar interests.
- Colleges and universities are reporting that many students who graduate from high school enter college unprepared for college level work and require remediation or simply drop out of college without a certificate or degree. Schools, districts and the state are working to keep students in schools and on track to graduate with the skills and knowledge needed to be successful in college, technical school or the workplace. Following are Kentucky programs focused on high school students.
- **GEAR UP Kentucky** (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Education Programs), funded by a federal grant, is a program that encourages low income middle and high school students to stay in school and attend post secondary education. It focuses on preparing students for college work and educating them and their families about financial resources available for college. The Department of Education, local schools, and colleges work together to coordinate this program. Kentucky received a \$10 million matching grant for 2000-2005 and has a second matching grant of \$21 million for 2005-2011.
- The **Kentucky Virtual High School** and the Virtual Advanced Placement Academy offer high school courses online throughout the school year and also for summer school. It is managed by the Kentucky Department of Education, but credit for courses is granted by the student's local high school.
 - Students must have approval from their high school to take these courses. The cost is \$150 per semester (½ credit) or \$300 per full course for schools but scholarships are available for many courses and fees have been lowered each year. The school should pay the tuition if the course is not available at the high

school. Students may be asked to pay the fee if the course is already offered at the school or is above and beyond the daily instructional program.

- KVHS teachers are Kentucky-certified in the subjects they teach.
- KVHS also offers 9-week credit recovery sessions for students year round, to help students who are behind or who may have failed a course.
- In 2006, the KVHS is expanding the number of courses in its Content Repository initiative to make high quality online content available at no cost to teachers in traditional classrooms to supplement face-to-face instruction. For more information visit the Web site at <http://www.kvhs.org/>.
- To support the secondary reform agenda, the Kentucky Department of Education applied for and was awarded Honor States Grants from the National Governors Association in the areas of Advanced Placement Expansion, Virtual Learning, and Longitudinal Data Systems. These initiatives provide resources and national expertise to help the state make needed changes in middle and high schools.
- The Council on Postsecondary Education and the Kentucky Department of Education participated in the **American Diploma Project (ADP)** to establish a statewide definition of college readiness in English and mathematics based on the American Diploma Project benchmarks. Beginning in 2005, public Kentucky colleges have agreed to place students in credit-bearing courses if they can demonstrate these standards of college readiness.
 - ACT of 18 in English for college writing classes
 - ACT of 19 in mathematics for entry-level math classes (which may not meet requirements for many college majors)
 - ACT of 22 in mathematics for college algebra (requirement for many college majors)
 - ACT of 27 in mathematics for college calculus (requirement for math-intensive majors)
- **The Kentucky High School Feedback Report**, prepared by the Council on Postsecondary Education, provides information to the public and to Kentucky high schools about their students' college-readiness, college first-year performance in English and mathematics, and persistence to sophomore year, of graduates who take the ACT and enroll in a participating Kentucky college or university. The 2002 High School Feedback Report was released in May 2006, and the 2004 report is expected in the fall of 2006. Go to www.education.ky.gov, click on Max Data System and click on Postsecondary for the latest reports.
- The **Kentucky Secondary Alliance**, created by the Department of Education has identified and provides support for over 75 high schools and the middle schools that send students to them, as they work to restructure their schools. In addition in 2005-06 they conducted seven student summits around the state talking with high school students about secondary education. The goal of the Kentucky Alliance is to mobilize the resources, knowledge, and capacities of the schools, districts, department of education, and communities to shape policy and practice so that **all** Kentucky students leave high school prepared and ready to pursue a next level of learning in college and/or the workforce.

- State and regional **P-16 Councils** (preschool through four years of college) are working to improve communication between schools and colleges in an effort to improve students' ability for success.
- Colleges, universities and community and technical colleges are working with local high schools to develop **dual credit classes** to offer college credit to students as they complete their high school careers. These programs can target low-achieving students who are at risk of dropping out of high school and high-achieving students who need the additional challenge of college level work and want to get a head start on postsecondary studies.
- The **Kentucky Scholars Program**, a project of the Partnership for Successful Schools, engages business leaders in conversations with high schools students to help them understand more about the skills needed for the workplace of the future. Students are encouraged to complete the "Scholars Core Course of Study" including four courses of English, three courses of math, three courses of science, three and one-half courses of social studies and two courses in a foreign language. Research has shown that students who successfully complete this coursework are more likely to be successful in college and the workplace.
- The Prichard Committee prepared a report and recommendations to improve high schools entitled "High Achieving High Schools." It is available on line at www.prichardcommittee.org or by calling 859-233-9849.

WHAT TO EXPECT

-  **All Kentucky high school students** should have access to advanced placement, International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment and dual credit courses. School-based decision making councils at each high school must adopt a policy on the recruitment and assignment of students to these courses recognizing that all students have the right to be academically challenged and encouraged to participate to the extent possible. Schools should be helping students through their individual learning plans to prepare for these higher level courses by taking any necessary prerequisite courses and taking more rigorous classes.
-  The opportunity to earn **KEES scholarships** based partly on high school grades, should be an incentive for students to do better in school. It should also encourage more students who thought they could never afford college to consider postsecondary education.
-  More emphasis will be placed on the need for students to take higher level classes to prepare themselves as well as possible for postsecondary education or the workplace.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Talk with students at all grade levels** about the need to take the highest level courses possible in middle and high school, and to continue taking these courses in their senior year to be well-prepared for college or work.

- ★ **Remind students and parents** about the opportunity to earn KEESS scholarships and the options to save for college or other postsecondary education programs.
- ★ **Ask** how your high school will help students meet the new graduation requirements and how they will use the new EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT and Work Keys to counsel students.
- ★ **Ask** about plans to offer Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and dual credit classes. Ask how previous students have scored on the AP exams. Scores of 3,4 or 5 (on a 5-point scale) suggest the course is meeting AP standards.
- ★ **Request** information about Kentucky Scholars, a model program of the Partnership for Successful Schools, for improving high school academic achievement. Contact the Partnership for more information.
- ★ **Encourage local business** leaders to use the *Learning Equals Earning Employee Communications Packet* developed by the Partnership for Successful Schools. It includes written and electronic messages employers can use to help employees better support local schools. Topics include reading, math and science, essential workplace skills, back-to-school issues, technology, high school records, quality teaching and summer learning. Also ask for *Learning Equals Earning* posters. See below for more information.
- ★ **Ask** for a copy of *Turn Up the Volume: The Students Speak* toolkit developed by the Partnership for Successful Schools. **Use** its detailed instructions to conduct research-quality focus group studies with students as facilitators. See below for contact information.
- ★ **Obtain and review** the Second Edition of *Ready for Work: Essential Skills for Kentucky Jobs*, a toolkit designed to help communities and schools address student performance and job preparation. Researched and produced by the Partnership for Successful Schools, this four-volume report looks at preparation of Kentucky students for life after high school from the perspective of employers, parents, educators, and students. See below for contact information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Department of Education**, (502) 564-4770 or visit the Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Default.htm>.
 - **Division of Career and Technical Education**, (502) 564-3472;
 - **Division of Curriculum Development**, (502) 564-2106;
 - **Kentucky Virtual High School**, (502) 564-4772 or (866) 432-0008 or visit the Web site at <http://www.kvhs.org/>;
 - **Division of Secondary and Virtual Learning**, (502) 564-4772
 - **Office of Leadership and School Improvement** (502) 564-2116;
 - **Special Projects Branch (advanced placement grant)**, (502) 564-2106.
- **Kentucky Education Savings Plan Trust**; (877) 598-7878 (KY TRUST) or visit the Web site at <http://www.kentuckytrust.org/>.
- **Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship Program**, (800) 928-8926 ext. 7397 or visit the Web site at <http://www.kheaa.com/>.

- **Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority**, (800) 928-8926 or visit the Web site at <http://www.kheaa.com/>.
- **Kentucky's Affordable Prepaid Tuition**; Office of the State Treasurer, 1-888-919-KAPT or visit <http://www.getkapt.com/>.
- **Partnership for Successful Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.partnershipforsuccessfulschools.org/>.
- **Kentucky Scholars Program**, (859) 278-6512 or pmarquette@kentuckyscholars.org or visit the Web site at www.kyscholars.org.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/>.
- **Web site with links to college and scholarship information**, <http://www.collegeky.com/>.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION: PREPARING STUDENTS FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- By law, Kentucky measures school success on several factors including the proportion of students who make a **successful transition** from school to work, postsecondary education, or the military.
- The **purpose** of career and technical education is to develop problem-solving skills, teach basic and advanced academic skills in a technological setting, and provide experience in all aspects of an industry students are preparing to enter.
- Students may participate in **authentic work-based learning experiences** while enrolled in high school such as internships, cooperative education, pre-apprenticeship, mentoring, shadowing, and community service.
- An **Individual Learning Plan** (ILP) is required of all students beginning in middle school indicating a career goal and a planned course of study necessary for a successful transition to postsecondary education or a career. Students may change career goals at any time. Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, students will have a new web-enabled ILP to help them better focus on postsecondary studies and careers.
- **Career and Technical Education (CTE) Profiles** provide an annual statewide report on the academic achievement of career and technical education students. The CATS/KCCT results are sorted by career clusters and posted to the KDE website (search for “Perkins Accountability Reports”) in January.
- The **Kentucky Department of Education Technical Assistance Management Design** is utilized to assist districts that do not meet performance goals or whose career/technical education students’ academic performance is lower than the district’s academic performance.

RESULTS

- Listed below are the statewide **transition results** comparing 2003 and 2005 CTE graduates. These figures do not take into account the number of students who drop out of school.

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2005</u>
✓ Attended college	50.4percent	58.1percent
✓ Employed	24.4percent	30.4percent
✓ Entered military	2.2percent	2.2percent
✓ Combined school and work	2.1percent	3.5percent
	<u>2003</u>	<u>2005</u>
✓ Self-employed	1.0percent	0.3percent
✓ Not employed or attending school	20percent	5.5percent

- Statewide Articulation Agreements in Agricultural Education, Business Education, and Family and Consumer Sciences have been developed with Kentucky universities (Eastern, Morehead, Murray, Western, Northern Kentucky, University of Kentucky, Louisville Technical Institute, and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) for any graduate meeting the specified criteria. These agreements encourage more students to enroll in postsecondary education, make an effort to pass skill standards assessments, achieve academically in career and technical education (CTE) courses, select and complete a career major, and earn college credit while in high school.
- Enrollment in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in grades 7-12 for 2003 was 207,721 students. Enrollment for 2004-2005 increased to 211,993 students.
- The overall statewide academic index (CATS) of CTE concentrators (students completing three or more CTE courses in a sequence of courses) increased 10.7 points over a five-year span (2001-2005) compared to an 8.5 increase for all other high school students.
- The following initiatives are being implemented across the state. They focus on keeping students in school, improving student academic and technical skill achievement, improving student preparation for the workforce, and increasing successful transition rates.
 - ✓ **Tech Prep** is a program of study that combines at least two years of high school with a minimum of two years of postsecondary education in a planned sequence of courses. It integrates academic and career/technical instruction; utilizes work-based and worksite learning related to students' career goals where appropriate and available; provides technical preparation in a career field such as engineering technology, applied science, mechanical, industrial, or practical art or trade, agriculture, health occupations, and business; builds student competence in mathematics, science, reading, writing, communications, economics, and workplace skills; leads to an associate or a baccalaureate degree or a postsecondary certificate in a specific career field; and leads to placement in appropriate employment or to further education.
 - ✓ **Jobs for Kentucky Graduates Program** has been implemented in high schools to address learning goals for students, drop-out prevention, and school-to-work transition designed to meet the needs of at-risk students. Each program has enrolled 30 to 40 students—juniors and seniors at risk of dropping out or not becoming successfully employed. A teacher (specialist) concentrates on providing students with extra help in job readiness skills and academic support. Students also receive intensive case management and support services. Upon graduation from high school, these students receive job search assistance.
 - ✓ **High Schools That Work** is designed to combine challenging academic courses and modern career/technical studies to raise the academic achievement of students. The focus is on school-wide revitalization that improves the academic and technical standards of the high school curriculum. Low-level academic and technical courses are eliminated; higher performance standards are set for students. Support services are included through such activities as a guidance and advisement program (a plan that assigns students to the same advisor throughout their high school years) and extra help is provided to help students achieve the higher standards. Kentucky currently has 59 *High Schools That Work* sites. The following practices are key to its success:
 - higher student expectations

- increased access to challenging vocational/technical studies
- rigorous and relevant academic studies
- students completing a focused program of studies based on a career major
- opportunities for students to participate in work-based learning
- teachers working together to plan and deliver integrated instruction
- students actively engaged in the learning process
- guidance and advising systems available for all students
- extra help for students to complete an accelerated learning program
- use of student assessments/evaluations for continuous improvement

Meeting Basic Proficiency Performance Goals on 2004 <i>High Schools That Work (HSTW) Assessment</i>		
Subject	All HSTW Sites 2004	KY HSTW Sites 2004
Reading	54percent	57percent
Mathematics	59percent	61percent
Science	48percent	52percent

- Award of Educational Achievement is an award recognizing high school seniors for completing specified course-taking criteria and meeting or exceeding the *High Schools That Work* performance goals in reading, science, and mathematics on the *HSTW* Assessment. In 2004, there were 1,089 Kentucky students who received this award.
- ✓ **Career and Technical Student Organizations** provide opportunities for students to develop leadership skills, teamwork, communications, and community service. The following organizations are available to high school students enrolled in career and technical education: FFA (agriculture), FBLA (business), FCCLA (family and consumer sciences), DECA (marketing), TSA (technology), SkillsUSA (industrial education), and HOSA (health science).
- ✓ **Unite to Read** is a statewide project designed by Kentucky's Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO) in partnership with Kentucky Educational Television and PBS KIDS, Student Technology Leadership Program (STLP), and Future Educators Association (FEA). The overall goal is to have all of these groups within a school or district working together in promoting literacy and lifelong reading.
- ✓ **Secondary Career and Technical Education Programs** are available in 171 school districts offering services in grades 7 through 12. Programs and curricula have been restructured based on new and emerging occupations to prepare students for all aspects of an industry. Career/technical areas are providing instructional programs designed around fourteen career clusters:
- ➔ Agriculture
 - ➔ Arts & Humanities
 - ➔ Business & Marketing
 - ➔ Communications
 - ➔ Construction
 - ➔ Education
 - ➔ Health Science
 - ➔ Human Services
 - ➔ Information Technology
 - ➔ Manufacturing
 - ➔ Public Services
 - ➔ Science & Mathematics (Pre-Engineering)
 - ➔ Social Sciences
 - ➔ Transportation

Students can find more information about each career cluster on the Department of Education Web site. (www.education.ky.gov , search for “Career and Technical Education”)

- ✓ **Interdisciplinary Courses** combine curriculum content from specific career technical areas with specific core academic areas that have the same academic rigor as traditional core content courses, but the content is delivered through a contextual, hands-on approach. The following interdisciplinary courses have been collaboratively developed by staff in the Divisions of Career and Technical Education and Curriculum utilizing teachers from both disciplines:

- ❖ Agribiology for Life Science component within the science requirement
- ❖ Agriscience for Life Science component within the science requirement
- ❖ Business Economics for Economics within the social studies requirement
- ❖ Computer-Aided Drafting for geometry requirement
- ❖ Construction Technology/Geometry for geometry requirement
- ❖ Consumer Economics for Economics within the social studies requirement
- ❖ Health and Wellness for the ½ credit requirement in health
- ❖ Math for Business and Industry for the math elective requirement
- ❖ Medical Science for Life Science component within the science requirement
- ❖ Medical Math for math elective
- ❖ Life Skills Health for ½ credit requirement in health
- ❖ Nutritional and Food Science for Life Science component within the science requirement

The curriculum outlines are available to all school districts and are posted on the KDE website. (www.education.ky.gov, search for “Interdisciplinary Courses”)

- **The Kentucky Occupational Skill Standards and Assessment System (KOSSA)** was developed by the Division of Career and Technical Education with the help of business and industry. In 2006, nearly 13,000 career and technical education students participated in eighteen assessment areas (horticulture, administrative support services, retail services, hospitality services, child development, family services, consumer services, manufacturing, production livestock, production crop, financial services, marketing, allied health, technology education/pre-engineering, communications, construction, and transportation). The assessments measure academic, employability, and occupational skills of students, which have been endorsed by business and industry. Participating students take at least three courses in an area related to the assessments. In 2006, forty-five percent of the students tested reached the cut-off score established by industry and education representatives and received Kentucky Occupational Skill Standards Certificates. For more information, contact the Division of Career and Technical Education at (502) 564-3472.

KOSSA State Growth and Results

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Assessment Areas	7	10	18	19	19	19	18
Students Assessed	5,645	6,865	12,365	12,463	13,056	12,639	12,912
Percent Passing	14	16	23	34	40	44	45

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Get involved** with your child's Individual Learning Plan to help them think about and plan for their future career. Attend career days/fairs with them or be a guest speaker. **Serve** as a judge for student organizations' career and technical competitive events.
- ★ **Obtain and review** the Second Edition of *Ready for Work: Essential Skills for Kentucky Jobs*, a toolkit designed to help communities and schools address student performance and job preparation. Researched and produced by the Partnership for Successful Schools, this four-volume report looks at preparation of Kentucky students for life after high school from the perspective of employers, parents, educators, and students. See below for contact information.
- ★ **Request** information about Kentucky Scholars, a program of the Partnership for Successful Schools that is a model for improving high school academic achievement. See below for contact information.
- ★ **Encourage** school-based decision making councils to support career and technical programs in high schools with funds necessary for hands-on activities.
- ★ **Ask** teachers, students, and business leaders how these programs are working.
- ★ **Write** to your elected state and local officials with specific examples of successes and problems you have noted.
- ★ **Ask** local school board members how they support career and technical education.
- ★ **Recognize** student achievement in career and technical education programs and the contributions of teachers and administrators.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Career and Technical Education** at (502) 564-3472 or visit the Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Default.htm> (search for Career & Technical Education for excellent information for students; interdisciplinary courses; skill standards and assessments; individual learning plans).
- **Kentucky Scholars Program**, (859)278-6512, pmarquette@kentuckyscholars.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.kyscholars.com>.
- **Partnership for Successful Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org or visit the Web site at www.partnershipforsuccessfulschools.org
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/>.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- **Exceptional students** are defined as those who differ from same-aged children in physical, mental, learning, emotional, or social characteristics and abilities to such a degree that they need special educational programs or services. This includes students with health, physical or mental impairments, vision or hearing impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, developmental delay, multiple disabilities, communication disorders, learning disabilities, emotional behavioral disabilities, and/or exceptional ability to perform at high levels (gifted and talented). Kentucky schools are held accountable for helping all students learn through the state's Commonwealth Accountability Testing System and the federal No Child Left Behind laws. See Assessment and Accountability beginning on page 1 for more information.
- Schools must review **achievement** data broken out by race, eligibility for the free lunch program, English as a second language, disability, and gender and set targets and plans for eliminating substantive gaps. Schools failing to meet targets in two years will submit their plans to the local superintendent for approval. After four years of not meeting targets, they will be reported to the Commissioner of Education for review and approval of school plans. These provisions are in Senate Bill 168 passed in 2002.
- The federal **No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)** requires states to set standards for performance in reading, math and science, assess student progress on meeting the standards and issue a report card that includes the percent of students reaching a proficient level of achievement as a whole and by subgroup. Goals are established that must be met for all students and by each subgroup based on ethnicity, poverty, English as a second language, and disabilities. Title I schools failing to reach the goals for all students and for each subgroup, fail to make "adequate yearly progress" and face consequences that give parents choices for their children. This federal law requires schools to focus on learning for every child regardless of income, race or disability.

Student with Disabilities

- Under the **federal Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA)**, all students with disabilities from ages three to twenty-one years must have available to them a "free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living." In addition, infants and toddlers with disabilities from birth to age three are eligible for evaluation and early intervention services, usually provided by agencies other than schools. Referrals can be made or more information obtained by calling "Child Find" at 1-800-688-0340. A state law adopted in 2004 requires that requests for a hearing alleging violations of the federal IDEA laws must be made within three years after the violation occurred.
- In Kentucky, students ages three to twenty-one with disabilities are served by public schools. Students eligible for these services must be offered an appropriate program in the "**least restrictive environment (LRE)**." Public schools must ensure that children with disabilities are not removed

from the regular education environment, unless the nature and severity of their disability is such that education in the regular classroom with special aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Exceptional children programs as well as home and hospital instruction must be available for those who need it.

- Kentucky's funding formula provides some **additional funding** to schools for those students defined as exceptional.
- Schools are accountable in Kentucky for helping all students succeed academically so all students take the state tests that determine school progress. Students with disabilities, who have special **accommodations** for everyday learning, may use those same accommodations when taking state assessments. Students with severe disabilities who are not able to take the test have an alternative (or modified) portfolio. These accommodations are acceptable for accountability in Kentucky's system but are not always acceptable for No Child Left Behind. The Department of Education is working to comply with the federal law.
- Each eligible exceptional student must have an **individual education program (IEP)**. School personnel and parents determine the student's educational needs, services needed, and expected results. School staff must report to parents (at least as often as parents are informed of nondisabled students' progress) on their child's progress toward the annual goals. The Kentucky Board of Education developed administrative regulations to see that these education programs are monitored for compliance with federal laws and regulations. The State Board is authorized to provide assistance to and withhold funds from districts that are not complying with these laws. These funds can be returned once districts are in compliance.
- **The Kentucky Special Education Mentor Program** was established to select and train expert special education teachers and administrators and assign them to assist districts that are not complying with state and federal laws.
- The **State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children (SAPEC)** advises and assists the Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Exceptional Children Services for children and students from birth through age twenty. The panel is required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The public is encouraged to comment via e-mail or speaking at their meetings. Meeting dates are posted on the department Web site at www.education.ky.gov ; search for SAPEC.
- Kentucky Parent Resource Centers (PRCs) are available in some school districts. They provide information and support to parents of exceptional children. A listing of Kentucky PRCs may be found at <http://www.education.ky.gov> ; search for PRC.
- Kentucky Special Parent Involvement Network (KY-SPIN) is a non-profit organization that promotes programs to enable children and their families to enhance their quality of life. For more information about KY-SPIN, go to <http://www.kyspin.com/>.
- **First Steps: Kentucky's Early Intervention System**, funded through the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), serves children ages birth to three whose development in communication, movement, learning, social growth, emotional growth, and adaptability is delayed. Anyone, including a family member, who is concerned about the development of an infant or toddler may make a referral to First Steps or get more information by calling the statewide toll free number, 1-800-442-0087. Each family makes the decision whether to participate in First Steps.

- The Kentucky Transition Program, funded through the Kentucky State Improvement Grant for Nurturing All Learners (KYSIGNAL), offers professional development, technical assistance, trainings, and other resources to school personnel, students, and parents to facilitate successful transition planning and post school supports. More information is available from the Human Development Institute, University of Kentucky, at 859-519-7375.
- The Kentucky Department of Education must give preference when selecting textbooks, to companies that make their materials available in additional formats for use by students with disabilities. This is an incentive to make textbook materials available for all students that was enacted into law in 2002. The Kentucky Accessible Materials Consortium (KAMC), the state repository for digitized textbooks, distributes accessible digital materials to all Kentucky public P-12 schools. Schools may order digital materials from the Kentucky Accessible Materials Database (KAMD) for use by qualified students with disabilities at no cost to the schools. With each textbook adoption cycle, increasing numbers of publishers are providing digital copies of new textbooks and instructional materials to the KAMC. Currently over 1,250 titles are available through the KAMD. For more information search for KAMC and KAMD at www.education.ky.gov.

Gifted and Talented Students

- Kentucky's definition of exceptional children includes gifted and talented students, defined as those who possess demonstrated or potential ability to perform at exceptionally high levels in one or more of the following categories: general intellectual aptitude, specific academic aptitude, creative or divergent thinking, psychological or leadership skills, and/or visual or performing arts.
- School districts are required to provide gifted education services for the Primary Talent Pool, primary program students informally selected, and for formally identified students in grades 4-12. The state provides some additional funds to assist school districts in providing these services.
- The purpose of the **State Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education** is to make recommendations to the Kentucky Board of Education and the Department of Education regarding services for gifted and talented students. The council's 19 governor-appointed voting members and three non-voting ex-officio members meet four times each year to discuss and make plans to address current needs of these students.
- **Gifted Student Services Plans (GSSP)** are required for all formally identified gifted students, grades 4-12 and serve as a means of communicating with parents. Districts are required to obtain information related to the interests, needs, and abilities of identified students from parents or guardians for use in determining appropriate services. Parents must be informed about the plan for their child, be updated no less than once a year, and understand how to request changes in services.
- The **Kentucky Virtual High School (KVHS)** is an option for offering challenging courses to gifted students. (See High Schools on pages 39 and contact information below.)

Students At-Risk

- **Students at-risk for educational failure** are defined in the law as those whose family income qualifies them for the federal school lunch program. To help these students succeed, Kentucky law

makes the following provisions:

- ✓ a commitment to provide all students with the opportunity to learn by including all children in the accountability program
 - ✓ preschool programs for four-year-old children who would qualify for the school lunch program
 - ✓ extended school services to allow additional instruction for students who need it
 - ✓ family resource and youth services centers to address problems that interfere with student learning (Advisory councils for these centers must include adequate representation of parents of all students in their schools.)
 - ✓ waiver or reduction of school fees for pupils who qualify for the free- and reduced-price lunch program.
- Title I funds from the federal government are available for some schools with high percentages of students on the free- and reduced-price lunch program to provide assistance to students who have academic deficiencies.
 - Kentucky has received a federal GEAR UP grant to encourage and support students at risk to attend postsecondary education. See page 39 for more information.

WHAT'S NEW?

- ➔ New federal regulations adopted after the reauthorization of IDEA have been issued. Contact the Department of Education for specific questions. See contact information below.
- ➔ The Kentucky Academy of Mathematics and Science, opening in the fall of 2007 and housed on the campus of Western State University, will be a residential high school for gifted students who intend to pursue a career in math and science. The program will serve 11th and 12th grade high school students from throughout Kentucky who have an exceptional interest and ability in these subjects. For more information contact The Center for Gifted Studies, 270-745-6323 or e-mail gifted@wku.edu or visit the academy web site www.wku.edu/academy.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Encourage schools to have high expectations for all students.** Don't assume students cannot learn because they have a disability or special learning need or live in poverty.
- ★ **Review** student test data broken out by poverty, English as a second language, gifted and talented, and disabilities to see how well students with special needs are performing. This information is available in your school's expanded report card and the Department of Education at <http://www.education.ky.gov>; search for School Performance Reports.
- ★ **Volunteer** to work on setting targets and plans to reduce any achievement gaps and **attend** public meetings required to review those plans.
- ★ **Talk** with and encourage students who have disabilities or special learning needs.
- ★ **Encourage all students** to consider taking challenging courses including algebra and advanced placement courses and set goals for themselves.

- ★ If you are concerned that a child ages birth to three years is not developing normally, **make a referral** to First Steps by calling the statewide toll free number, 1-800-442-0087. For those ages three to twenty-one call Child Find at 1-800-688-0340.
- ★ If you know parents who are struggling to help their special needs children in school, suggest they **call one of the parent support groups** listed below.
- ★ If you know of or have a child who is gifted and needs additional services, ask to speak to the director of gifted and talented services in your district or contact the Kentucky Association for Gifted Education. See information below.
- ★ **Call** the Department of Education if you believe children in your district who have special needs are not being served well (502) 564-4970.
- ★ **Recognize and support** the diverse academic, social, economic, gender, and cultural learning needs of students.
- ★ **Encourage** all parents to get involved in the PTA/PTO/PTSA. If your school does not have a PTA, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office at (502) 226-6607.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Kentucky**, 315 Guthrie Street, Suite 300, Louisville, Kentucky, 40202, (502) 581-1181 (government infringement on Bill of Rights).
- **The Center for Gifted Studies**, Western Kentucky University, 1 Big Red Way, Bowling Green, KY 42101, (270) 745-6323; e-mail: gifted@wku.edu or visit the Web site at www.wku.edu/gifted.
- **Child Find**, 1 (800) 688-0340 for information and referral of children ages three through twenty-one.
- **Family Voices of Kentucky at Parent Information Network of Kentucky (PINK)**, 4915 Hickory Hollow Lane, Shepherdsville, KY 40165; (502) 471-6239; (information and networking with other families of children with disabilities).
- **First Steps: Kentucky's Early Intervention System**, (502) 564-3756, visit the Web site at <http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/firststepshtm> (evaluation and services for children birth to three with developmental delays).
- **Kentucky Assistive Technology Service (KATS) Network**, 8412 Westport Road, Louisville, KY 40242; (800) 327-5287; visit the Web site at <http://www.katsnet.org/> (information and referral to individuals with disabilities).
- **Kentucky Association for Gifted Education (KAGE)**; P.O. Box 9610, Bowling Green, Kentucky 42102-9610; (270) 745-4301 or visit the Web site at <http://www.wku.edu/kage/> or e-mail at kage@wku.edu.
- **Kentucky Autism Training Center and Resource Center**. Spectrum Building, 911 South Brook St., Louisville, KY 40203, 502-852-4631 or 800-334-8635; A manual, *Technical Assistance for Autism* is available from the Kentucky Department of Education; (502) 564-2672; e-mail: katc@louisville.edu; or visit the Web site at <http://www.louisville.edu/kyautismtraining/>.
- **Kentucky Department of Education**: Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601, (800) KDE-KERA (502-564-4770) or visit the Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Default.htm>.

- **Division of Curriculum Development**, Learning Strategies Branch, 502-564-2106 ext. 4137 (gifted and talented education); (502) 564-2106 (advanced placement grant).
- **Division of Exceptional Children Services**, (502) 564-4970; or visit the Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/> (search for exceptional children).
- **Kentucky Virtual High School (KVHS)**, (866) 432-0008, (502) 564-4772 or visit the Web site at <http://www.kvhs.org/>.
- **Kentucky Disabilities Coalition**, P.O. Box 1589, Frankfort, KY 40602; (502) 875-1871 or (800) 977-7505; fax (502) 875-1982 or visit the Web site at <http://www.geocities.com/kydisabilitiescoalition/> (coalition of over 70 organizations that refer callers to support groups).
- **Kentucky Partnership for Families and Children**, 207 Holmes Street, 1st Floor, Frankfort, KY 40601; (502) 875-1320 or (800) 369-0533; fax (502) 875-1399; or visit the Web site at <http://www.kypartnership.org>.
- **Kentucky Special Parent Involvement Network (KY SPIN)**, 10301-B Deering Road, Louisville, KY 40272 (800) 525-7746 or Louisville area (502) 937-6894; fax (502) 937-6464; visit the Web site at <http://www.kyspin.com/> or e-mail at spininc@kyspin.com; (training, information and support to parents and families of children with all types of disabilities).
- **Learning Disabilities Association of Kentucky, Inc., (LDA of Kentucky)** 2210 Goldsmith Lane, Suite 118, Louisville, Kentucky 40218; (502) 473-1256; e-mail: ldaofky@aol.com or visit the Web site at <http://www.ldaofky.org/>.
- **Office of Family Leadership, Department of Mental Health**, 100 Fair Oak Lane, 4E-B, Frankfort, KY 40621; (502) 564-7700; or visit the Web site at <http://www.mhmr.ky.gov> (support and information for families of children with emotional and behavioral problems).
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/>.
- **Protection and Advocacy Division**, 100 Fair Oaks Lane, 3rd floor, Frankfort, KY 40601; (800) 372-2988; (502) 564-2967; or visit the Web site at <http://www.kypa.net/> (protection of rights for persons with disabilities and mental illnesses).
- **Spina Bifida Association of Kentucky**, 982 Eastern Parkway, Box 18, Louisville, KY 40217; (502) 637-7363; (866) 340-SBAK (7225); fax (502) 637-1010; e-mail: sbak@sbak.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.sbak.org/> (information and referral service for families and individuals affected by spina bifida).

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION: LEARNING, REPRESENTATION, AND EMPLOYMENT

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- Schools are held accountable in Kentucky for educating **all students**. **Data on student performance** must be reported by race, gender, English proficiency, eligibility for the free- and reduced-price lunch program and special needs. Under Kentucky's Senate Bill 168 and the federal No Child Left Behind laws, schools not meeting goals are subject to sanctions. See Assessment and Accountability beginning on page 1.
- The Department of Education must report test scores to schools broken out or disaggregated by group and indicate substantial differences or **gaps in achievement**. Schools with gaps must work with their local superintendent to set targets for closing the gaps and they must work with parents and staff to develop plans to close these gaps. If targets are not met within two years, councils must submit improvement plans to the superintendent for review and approval. If they are not met within two two-year cycles, schools are reported to the commissioner of education for review, approval of school improvement plans, and possible assistance. School plans will be presented and school board reviews will be conducted in public meetings. (Enacted in 2002)
- **Teacher professional development programs** must include effective awareness and sensitivity training to help teachers motivate and nurture students of diverse cultures.
- **School-based decision-making councils** in schools with eight percent or more minority students must have minority representation.
- **Family Resource and Youth Services Center Advisory Councils** must have adequate representation of parents of the different groups of students enrolled in their schools.
- **Superintendent screening committees** in districts with eight percent or more minority students must have minority representation.
- Appointments to **state boards and commissions** must include reasonable minority representation.
- Criteria for **textbook selection** must include the contributions to society of people of all ethnic backgrounds.
- The law requires superintendents to seek **minority applicants** when vacancies exist.
- The Education Professional Standards Board is responsible for **monitoring diversity at teacher preparation programs** and providing assistance to increase the diversity of Kentucky teachers.
- The Office of Education Accountability (OEA) must conduct **periodic reviews of school and district recruitment, selection, evaluation, termination, and promotion policies**. All districts with eight percent or more minority students and less than eight percent minority staff and any

district with complaints of unfair hiring practices must be reviewed. Exclusionary practices must be reported to the Kentucky Board of Education for investigation. (Enacted in 2002.)

- The Kentucky Native American Heritage Commission has been created to promote awareness of significant Native American influences. (Enacted in 2004.)

RESULTS

- Statewide assessment scores show **gaps in achievement** between different groups of students. A smaller percent of African American, Hispanic, and special needs students meet state learning goals than white students, and a smaller percent of students eligible for the free or reduced lunch program meet goals than students not eligible.
- **Comprehensive School Improvement Plans** (CSIPs) must address equity issues.
- The Kentucky Department of Education's **Division of Leadership and Instructional Support** is responsible for assisting schools in creating and maintaining equitable opportunities for learning and providing multi-cultural education and cultural diversity. **An Equity Analysis Performance Descriptions Instrument** is available as a resource tool to assist schools with meeting federal and state requirements for meeting the educational needs of all students. It is available by searching for "Equity Analysis Performance Descriptions Instrument" at www.education.ky.gov.
- The Kentucky Department of Education created a Minority Student Achievement Task Force to determine how to eliminate the gap in student achievement between minority and other students. The **Partnership for Minority Student Achievement** (PMSA) was organized to work intently on closing achievement gaps. It has been instrumental in the implementation of new and revised laws with regard to equitable instruction in the state of Kentucky.

The Partnership has been charged with reviewing and analyzing achievement gap data; investigating promising research and practices; and developing a set of actions, with timelines, for improving the performance of minority students in Kentucky. Seven districts have been identified for additional resources and professional development. They encompass almost 75 percent of the African American student population in Kentucky. They include Bardstown Independent, Christian County, Fayette County, Hardin County, Jefferson County, Owensboro Independent and Paducah Independent.

Success rates for the PMSA have been associated with Leadership, Culture, and Climate at both the school and district levels. While the focus had initially been on African American students, success has not only been evident in the minority populations but also on the overall school population. Further information is available from the Division of Federal Programs and Instructional Equity at the Kentucky Department of Education. (See contact information below.)

- The **Commissioner's Educational Equity Council**, created in 2001 by combining members of the Education Equity Task Force and the Minority Student Achievement Task Force, meets quarterly with the Commissioner of Education to monitor progress and offer advice on closing the gaps.
- The **Minority Educator Recruitment and Retention Scholarship** was established to provide educational opportunities for minorities interested in becoming teachers and as a method of

recruiting and retaining minority educators for all Kentucky schools. As the population of Kentucky and the nation becomes increasingly more diverse, it is important to have a teacher workforce that mirrors the population.

The 1992 Kentucky General Assembly authorized **scholarship funds** for minority students who want to become teachers, especially in the areas of mathematics and science. From 1994-2006, funds totaling \$3.9 million have served approximately 3,425 Kentucky minority students.

By 2004, 120 minority teachers had graduated through the **Alternative Routes to Certification** program and had been certified and hired.

- **Counselors for the New Millennium** is a training and recruitment program designed to provide minority candidates an opportunity to become part of school leadership through counseling. It was created by the Division of Educator Quality and Diversity at the Kentucky Department of Education and the University of Louisville with the goal of providing students from different backgrounds the care and attention necessary for them to be successful.
- **Summer institutes** in math, science, technology, and communications have been held for middle and high school students in Jefferson and Fayette counties to interest minority students in these subjects and encourage them to consider a career in teaching.
- An **Administrative Leadership Institute** has been established by the Department of Education, the Kentucky Alliance of Black School Educators, and Western Kentucky University. The goal of the institute is to prepare and certify a cadre of highly qualified minority educators who can assume leadership roles as **principals and superintendents in Kentucky**. It provides resources, guidance and support to reduce some of the traditional barriers and challenges encountered during the certification process.
- To address the problem of a lack of **minorities in leadership positions**, the Department of Education has contacted **local superintendent screening committees**, assisted in identifying minority candidates, created a Web site dedicated to creating a pool of applicants for superintendents, and in 1998 created an ad hoc committee of Kentucky citizens to address the issue of a lack of minority persons in leadership positions. In 2003 the department created a mentoring program, pairing minority candidates with experienced superintendents. As of summer 2006, two African American women have been hired as superintendents as a result of this program.
- The Prichard Committee conducted a study of **high poverty, high performing schools** to see what was happening in schools that have been successful in educating students at risk. Common characteristics in these schools include:
 - ✓ School-wide ethic of high expectations for everyone in the building;
 - ✓ Caring, respectful relationships among all;
 - ✓ Faculty takes responsibility for student learning, no excuses;
 - ✓ Recruitment strategy for obtaining quality teachers;
 - ✓ Systems for regularly assessing progress of individuals students;
 - ✓ Strong academic, instructional focus;
 - ✓ Team approach to decision-making.

These findings are similar to other studies of high poverty, high performing schools.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Review** your school's test scores for different groups of students. If there are achievement gaps, volunteer to participate on setting targets and developing plans for closing those gaps as required by SB 168.
- ★ **Ask** how your school and district address equity and diversity in comprehensive improvement plans. Suggest using the Equity Analysis Performance Descriptions Instrument available from the Division of Federal Programs and Instructional Equity to assess what is happening and determine what more can be done to serve all students well. An update will be available soon.
- ★ **Attend** the annual Gender Education/Title IX Conference, part of the annual spring Teaching and Learning Conference. For registration and more information, visit the Department of Education's Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KTLC/default.htm>.
- ★ **Talk** with and encourage students from all backgrounds. Ask whether they think all students are being well served. Remind them about the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarships available for all Kentucky students (See page 35.)
- ★ **Recognize** the diverse academic, social, economic, gender, and cultural learning needs of students.
- ★ **Look for and encourage** the use of instructional materials that are accurate and free of stereotypes.
- ★ **Make a special effort to include** persons from all backgrounds on school or council committees.
- ★ If you observe that your child's school is not sensitive to the needs of diverse students, **suggest** an awareness workshop. Call the Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Federal Programs and Instructional Equity for more information at (502) 564-3791.
- ★ **Sponsor** a school social event that involves families from different cultures to share foods, customs, and so on.
- ★ **Encourage** minority students to consider teaching as a career.
- ★ **Encourage** minority candidates to run for school-based decision making council positions and participate on council committees. Ask the council how it will incorporate minority issues and contributions in its school plan.
- ★ **Encourage** parents of minority students to get involved in the PTA/PTO/PTSA. If your school does not have a PTA, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office at (502) 226-6607.
- ★ **Ask** your superintendent how your district recruits minority applicants and works to retain minority employees.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Commission on Human Rights** at (800) 292-5566.
- **Kentucky Department of Education;** (502) 564-4770 or visit the Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Default.htm>.
 - **Division of Federal Programs and Instructional Equity** at (502) 564-3791.
 - **Division of Educator Quality and Diversity,** (502) 564-1479.
 - **Division of Leadership and Instructional Support,** (502) 564-4201.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence,** P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/>.

SCHOOL-BASED DECISION MAKING

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- **School-based decision making (SBDM)** is a shared process, in which most of the policies and plans for instruction are made at the local school. It gives teachers, principals, and parents the power to determine the direction of their schools. It was enacted to **improve student learning** by letting the people closest to students make educational decisions.
- School councils usually include six people: the principal (usually the chairperson), three teachers (elected by teachers), and two parents (elected by parents). These elections are usually held in the spring of each year.
- In schools with a minority student population of eight percent or greater, schools must have **minority representation** on the council. If after the regular election there is no minority member on the council, all parents may vote to elect a minority parent. In addition, all teachers vote to elect a minority teacher. If there are no minority teachers in the school, another teacher is elected by the faculty. If minority teachers at the school do not want to serve, no additional teacher is elected.
- Each school council is required by law to make **policy decisions** in the following areas.
 - ✓ curriculum
 - ✓ instruction and instructional materials including textbooks
 - ✓ instructional practices
 - ✓ assignment of students and use of space
 - ✓ master school schedule
 - ✓ staff positions at the school
 - ✓ assignment of staff time
 - ✓ school budget including professional development funds and use of school reward money
(All of these decisions are included in school plan due each March.)
 - ✓ how the principal will consult with the council when there are vacancies
 - ✓ discipline and classroom management
 - ✓ extracurricular programs and student participation policies
 - ✓ alignment with state standards
 - ✓ use of technology
 - ✓ program evaluation
 - ✓ wellness policy (See What's New? below.)

School councils set **policies**, but principals continue day-to-day operation and management of the schools, and principals and faculty members implement the policies.

- **Councils must develop comprehensive school improvement plans (CSIP)** using school assessment data to ensure that each student makes academic progress. This data must be provided by the Department of Education no later than November 1 of each year and be disaggregated or broken out by race, gender, disability, English proficiency and participation in the federal free and reduced lunch program. The department must identify gaps in achievement and notify schools when significant gaps exist. These schools must set two-year targets and develop plans for closing these

gaps by February 1 in each odd-numbered year. The superintendent and the school council must agree on the council's targets and submit them to the local school board. Councils must work with parents, faculty and staff to develop the targets and plans and present their plan in a public meeting at the school. The local board must determine if each school meets its targets. Schools failing to meet the targets must revise their plans and submit them to the superintendent for review and approval a second time. Schools failing to meet targets for two two-year cycles may be reported to the Commissioner of Education and the state school board for review and approval of improvement plans. The department may provide assistance if deemed necessary. (Enacted 2002.)

- When there is a **vacancy**, the council selects the principal. For other vacancies, the principal makes the final hiring decision after consulting with the council. (This may vary if the school has not met achievement goals and council authority has been transferred.) Hiring usually takes place in the spring and summer. The required **consultation policy** must include a process for meetings, timelines, interviews, reviews of written applications, reviews of references, and how to address situations when the council is not available for consultation.
- **School council authority** in schools failing to meet state accountability goals for two two-year cycles in a row and undergoing their second scholastic audit, may be **transferred** to the superintendent or a highly skilled educator. The school team and a district audit team must jointly recommend a transfer for the decision-making authority to be removed. School and district improvement plans must include ways to strengthen the school council and the decision-making process within the school. School council authority is restored when the school meets its goal for school accountability. See also Assessment and Accountability beginning on page 1. (Enacted 2004)
- **Use of three of the four professional development days** required by law is determined by the school council and must be consistent with the professional development called for in the school's comprehensive school improvement plan. The principal can work with individual teachers to determine needs for teachers' individual growth plans.
- School-based decision making councils at every high school must adopt a policy on the **recruitment and assignment of students to advanced placement**, International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment, or dual credit courses recognizing that all students have the right to be academically challenged and encouraged to participate to the extent possible. Councils must make available a core of courses (one course in four of six areas — English, science, mathematics, social studies, foreign language and arts) that may be provided through on-site instruction, the Kentucky Virtual High School, or other on-line alternatives. Councils should also consider making arrangements for students to take these classes at local colleges or universities. To prepare for success in these higher level courses, councils need to find ways to help students plan ahead through their individual learning plans to take any necessary prerequisite courses. (Enacted 2002)
- The council must consult with the librarian on **maintenance of the library media center** including purchase of instructional materials, information technology, and equipment. Schools are required to have a library media center, with services from a certified media librarian. Librarians may serve more than one school.
- The **school safety bill** requires that school councils have a school safety plan along with policies on discipline and behavior that are consistent with school district policy. These plans must be reviewed and amended as often as needed to ensure a safe learning environment. (Enacted 1998)

- School councils that use **committees** to do their work must establish policies to facilitate the involvement of parents, classified staff members such as secretaries, cafeteria workers, and custodians, and other interested persons on these committees.
- School council members are required to receive **training** each year, usually in the summer. New members must attend at least six hours of training, which must include information on the authority, duties, and responsibilities of council members, the state accountability process, and the tools available to councils. Those who have served one year or more must attend at least three hours. Training for new members must be conducted by persons endorsed by the Department of Education and must be completed no later than 30 days after members have taken office. Experienced council members have 120 days to complete their training. The cost of training or professional development for parent members of school councils or committees may be paid for with school's professional development funds.
- The principal must **submit the names and addresses of school council members, along with verification that they have completed required training**, to the superintendent, who is to communicate this information to the Department of Education by November 1 of each year. (The Department reviews this information after November 1 each year after it is posted on school district web pages, which satisfies the requirement to report to the Department.)
- Council members who will be hiring a principal must complete **training on recruitment and interviewing for principal selection prior to beginning the principal selection process**.
- The **definition of parent** for school council purposes includes parent, stepparent, or foster parent of a student, or a person who has legal custody of a student pursuant to a court order and with whom the student resides.
- **Parents may vote** for school council members only if their child will be a student attending that school during the term in which the council serves. For example, parents of seniors may not vote in the high school election unless they have another child who will attend high school the next year, and parents of middle school graduates may vote in the high school council election where their student will attend.
- **Parents may not serve as members of the school council** if they or their relatives work in the school in which the parent will serve or in the district central office. They may serve if they work or have relatives working in another school in the district.
- Local school boards may require **annual reports** from councils to describe a school's progress in reaching the educational goals set by law and the district.
- **Councils may adopt terms for longer than the one-year** specified in the law, but that rule will apply only to councils elected after the change is made. Members may serve more than one term in a row. There is no limit to the number of terms served.
- **Teachers elected to school councils cannot be involuntarily transferred** during their term of office. **Teachers may serve** as members of the school council regardless of their place of residence. In the past teachers could not serve if they lived outside the school district.




■ All schools must have councils, with three exceptions:

- ✓ a district with only one school is exempt
- ✓ schools that have met school accountability goals on CATS may be exempt if teachers and parents vote not to have a council
- ✓ certain district-operated entities such as vocational, alternative, special education schools, and preschools are exempt

WHAT'S NEW?

- New state and federal laws require schools to plan **to improve student health**. Federal law requires school districts to adopt local wellness policies. State law requires districts to assess the nutrition and the physical activity environment and adopt a plan for improving nutrition and physical activity. Councils in schools with students in kindergarten through grade 5, are required to adopt a wellness policy that “includes moderate to vigorous physical activity each day” and encourages students to make “healthy choices.” In addition, councils in schools that serve any grade between kindergarten and grade five must adopt an assessment tool to determine each child’s level of physical activity. These policies must comply with state and federal laws. (Federal law enacted 2004; state law enacted 2005.)

WHAT TO EXPECT

-  Schools with gaps in achievement between different groups of students should be setting targets and developing plans for reducing those gaps, which should result in more focus on curriculum and instruction for every student.
-  Councils should be paying more attention to professional development that helps teachers work with students to improve academic achievement.
-  Nearly 1,200 school councils with 1,200 principals, 3,600 teachers, and nearly 2,400 parents are making important school decisions. Many of the parents who have served on school councils are serving on their local school boards.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Get involved**. Run for a school council seat or volunteer to serve on a council committee. Attend council meetings and share your opinions with your parent and teacher representatives.
- ★ **Work** to elect parent and teacher representatives to your school council who care about education for all children in your school. People with a broad perspective instead of a focus on one issue, usually make the best council members.
- ★ If there is a PTA/PTO/PTSA in your school, **volunteer** to help with school council elections to inform parents and work to elect good council members. If there is no PTA in your school, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office at (502) 226-6607 .

- ★ **Suggest** that your school council join the Kentucky Association of School Councils. You can attend its fall conference and use its training opportunities whether your school is a member or not. See below for more information.
- ★ **Recognize** the contributions of school council members as they work to improve your school. Let them know you appreciate their time and commitment to your school. Recognize administrators and board members who support school councils.
- ★ **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask school board members how they are supporting school councils and helping them make the best decisions for students.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **CouncilCoach**, offers varied support services for councils, including training, legal answers, and policy reviews. Free QuickReports on council-related topics are also available from www.councilcoach.com. Contact CouncilCoach at (859) 583-3308 or sweston@councilcoach.com
- **Kentucky Association of School Councils** (organization of school councils that is the approved provider of school council training, offers information, workshops, and literature) (859) 238-2188 or visit the Web site at <http://www.kasc.net/>.
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Leadership and Instructional Support** (502) 564-4201, or visit the Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov> (numerous technical assistance documents available for free download by searching for SBDM Technical Assistance)
- **Kentucky PTA**, (502) 226-6607 (parent handbook on school-based decision making, \$3 each for PTA members, \$5 for non-members plus \$3 for shipping and handling)
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/>

FAMILY RESOURCE/YOUTH SERVICES CENTERS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- Kentucky law provides **family resource and youth services centers** to help students and their families who face social, economic, or health barriers that may interfere with learning. Schools are eligible to apply for center grants, if at least one-fifth of the students qualify for free- and/or reduced-price lunch. Grants are provided through the state Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Family resource centers serve elementary schools; youth services centers serve middle and high schools. Most alternative schools or preschools that stand alone (separate from other schools) are paired with an eligible school.
- The coordinators at the centers identify problems and link students and families to local resources that help students be more ready to learn.
- By law, family resource centers are required to address at least these services:
 - ✓ full-time preschool child care for children two and three years of age
 - ✓ after-school child care for children four through twelve
 - ✓ families-in-training to support expectant families and those with infants and young children
 - ✓ parent and child education
 - ✓ support and training for child care providers
 - ✓ health services or referrals
- Youth services centers must address:
 - ✓ referrals to health and social services
 - ✓ employment counseling, training, and placement
 - ✓ summer and part-time job development
 - ✓ drug and alcohol abuse counseling
 - ✓ family crisis and mental health counseling
- Resource centers are guided by **local advisory councils**, which must include parents representative of the school population, service providers, and educators. One-third of the members must be parents and no more than one-third can be educators. At least two students serve on councils for youth services centers.
- The Cabinet for Health and Family Services oversees the Division of Family Resource and Youth Services Centers. This includes the Central Office staff along with ten Regional Program Managers who provide technical assistance and training to center staff and school districts. Regional staff are housed in sites across the state. For more information regarding the regional staff please visit their Web site.

RESULTS

- As of June 2006, there were **778 centers** serving **1137 schools**. Of these centers, 397 are family resource centers serving elementary schools, 234 are youth services centers serving middle and high schools and 147 are combined centers serving all grades. It is expected that there will be 800 centers serving 1162 schools in 2006-07.
- The budget for family resource and youth services centers was increased to \$54.4 million in 2006-07 and \$57.2 million in 2007-08, an increase from the \$51.9 million budgeted in 2005-06. This is to provide an increase in per pupil funding for the first time in four years as well as funds to serve additional schools. It is anticipated that at least 54 additional schools will receive funding for center services by July 1, 2007.
- Previous research has shown that schools with family resource and youth services centers have increased parental involvement, increased school readiness, decreased barriers to learning and increased teacher satisfaction.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Volunteer** to participate on a Family Resource or Youth Services Center Advisory Council.
- ★ **Suggest that a Parents and Teachers Talking Together (PT3)** meeting be conducted through your center. This is a way resource centers can involve parents and determine more about school needs. Contact the Prichard Committee for more information at (800) 928-2111.
- ★ **Ask** members of your school-based decision making council how they coordinate with your center's advisory council. Suggest that the school council, resource center advisory council, and PTA board meet together once or twice a year to coordinate plans and activities.
- ★ **Volunteer** at your center. See what needs you, your church, or other organizations can meet.
- ★ **Write** to your elected officials with examples of successes or problems with Family Resource and Youth Services Centers. See page 103 for information on contacting state legislators.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Cabinet for Health and Family Services**, Division of Family Resource and Youth Services Centers, (502) 564-4986, or visit the Web site at www.chfs.ky.gov/dhss/frysc/.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/>.

SCHOOL SAFETY AND SCHOOL HEALTH

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- The 1998 General Assembly passed a **school safety bill** to provide every student access to a safe, secure, and orderly school that is conducive to learning. It has many provisions including the following:
 - ✓ Schools and districts must have **plans, policies, and procedures** for assisting students who are at risk of school failure and who engage in disruptive or disorderly behavior.
 - ✓ **The Kentucky Center for School Safety (KCSS)** is located at Eastern Kentucky University. KCSS is a collaborative effort that includes the Kentucky School Boards Association, the University of Kentucky and Murray State University. Its mission includes serving as a central point for data collection, analysis, and research, distributing information about research and safety programs, and providing technical assistance and training for schools and communities. This center is governed by a board of directors appointed by the governor, representing most agencies that deal with children. This board reports to the Secretary of the Education, Arts, and Humanities Cabinet in the governor's office.
 - ✓ The Kentucky Department of Education is responsible for **establishing and maintaining a statewide data collection system** for information related to school violence, possession of weapons or drugs, student arrests, and the number of suspensions, expulsions, and uses of corporal punishment. It is responsible for setting discipline code guidelines and for awarding grants to districts to establish alternative education programs. The department also works collaboratively with the Kentucky Center for School Safety to develop, promote, and disseminate information about school safety.
 - ✓ **Schools and school districts must assess their school safety and student discipline** guidelines and develop school safety plans. The Kentucky Center for School Safety encourages schools and districts to review and revise these plans on a regular basis. Districts are also encouraged to engage the community and other agencies in planning for possible emergencies, working to keep schools safe and communicating with the public.
 - ✓ School boards must adopt **district codes of acceptable student behavior and discipline codes**, reference them in all school handbooks for parents and students, and post them in all schools. Those policies must include immediately addressing situations when students have or sell drugs or controlled substances at school or who have physically assaulted, battered, or abused staff or students at school or school functions; or who bring weapons to school, which requires disciplinary actions up to and including expulsions. Students who bring weapons to school must be expelled for a period not less than one calendar year. All school employees and parents shall be provided a copy of the codes.
 - ✓ School boards must establish a process for a two-way communication system for teachers and staff to notify administrators of an emergency.

- ✓ Students who have been expelled must be offered educational services in an alternative school program, unless there is clear and convincing evidence that they posed a threat to the safety of students or school staff or that the student cannot be placed in a state-funded agency program.
 - ✓ Exceptional children cannot be suspended or expelled if the behavior is related to their disability, unless there is a threat to the safety of other students, staff, or themselves. In that case, they must be placed in an alternative program or receive alternative services.
 - ✓ Primary school students shall not be suspended unless their presence poses a safety threat to other children, staff, or themselves.
 - ✓ Principals are required to report to law enforcement officials any assault causing serious injury or involving a weapon, sexual offense, kidnapping, drug or illegal controlled substance offense, or school property damage.
 - ✓ Certain school staff have access to more information from the courts about violent offenders who are enrolled in their school. Courts must notify the schools when students are convicted of such offenses. These rules were amended in 2004. Check with the Kentucky Center for School Safety for details. See below for contact information.
- In an effort to assure student safety, all newly hired certified staff (teachers, principals, and other administrators) are required to have both state and national **criminal records checks**. State criminal records checks are required for all classified employees (secretaries, custodians, bus drivers, and so on) and volunteers who have contact with students on a regularly scheduled or continuous basis, or who have supervisory responsibility for students at school or on school-sponsored trips.
 - In 2001 a new law defined the crime of **terroristic threatening** in the first, second, and third degrees. It increased penalties for bomb threats or other false statements that would cause the evacuation of buildings (such as fire alarms) and for making threats about killing or injuring people on school property or at school functions. It also increased penalties for use of bombs or weapons of mass destruction resulting in injury to others, and use of such weapons in schools or government agencies even if no one is injured.
 - Senate Bill 85 enacted in 2004 doubled the fines for speeding in a school zone where flashing lights have been installed.
 - **Safe and Drug-Free Schools**, a provision of the federal No Child Left Behind law, allows parents of students who are victims of violence at school or who attend a “persistently dangerous school” to transfer to a safer public school. States must define “persistently dangerous.” Schools applying for Title IV funds must involve parents in establishing and carrying out these programs.

RESULTS

- School districts each receive \$20,000 plus a per pupil amount to improve school safety and student discipline through alternative education programs and other services. Funds have been reduced from a high of \$12 million/year to \$10.3 in 2006-07 and 2007-08. These funds have been included in the “flexible fund” category, meaning school districts can use some of these funds for other programs.

- The Kentucky Center for School Safety has a clearinghouse and website for safe school information, provides support for student “anti-violence” groups, has developed a School-Centered Emergency Management Guide along with a training program, and is working to support and improve alternative education sites throughout the state. See below for contact information.
- The Kentucky Center for School Safety has collected data since 1998-99. Reports are available on the website. Statewide, overall board policy violations (offenses that break board policy but do not break the law) decreased between 2003-04 and 2004-05 (85,714 to 83,002). However that is an increase from 80,949 in 2002-03. Law violations (offenses that break the law) also declined from 6,028 to 5,376 from 2003-04 to 2004-05, continuing a decrease from 2002-03 when it was 7,692. Possession of firearms incidents decreased from 49 to 23 during that time period although possession of other weapons remained relatively stable (259 in 2002-2003 to 255 in 2004-2005) In 2004-05 211 students were expelled for law violations compared to 271 in 2003-04 and 237 in 2002-03. Out-of-school suspensions for board violations increased from 76,888 in 2002-03 to 79,717 in 2004-05. Drug abuse violations declined overall from 2,617 violations in 2002-03, 3,198 in 2003-04, and 2,501 in 2004-05.
- Males are approximately three times more likely than females to receive disciplinary actions for both board and law violations (74percent v. 26percent for board violations and 72percent v. 28percent for law violations in 2004-2005).
- A disproportionate number of African American students receive disciplinary actions for board violations; African-American students received 20.55percent of all disciplinary actions while constituting only 10.48percent of the student population in 2004-05.

WHAT'S NEW?

- ➔ The Kentucky Center for School Safety is collecting more detailed information about violations and disciplinary action including grade levels, student eligibility for the free or reduced lunch program, the time of day and location of incidences. This may help schools as they work to improve school safety.
- ➔ Parent Aggression Study: A state-wide survey of educators was conducted by the Kentucky Center for School Safety to: determine the extent of uncivil parental/guardian behavior being directed toward teachers and school officials; heighten public awareness if parental aggression was determined to have become a problem in schools; partner with the appropriate agencies to equip parents and educators (through professional training) to form cooperative and productive working relationships; and encourage local boards of education to revisit their “civility” policies in an effort to reacquaint parents and the community with this board policy.

The survey results revealed that the vast majority of educators have had more positive interactions with parents/guardians than negative. However, there are a number of parents who have behaved in an aggressive manner toward educators.

The Kentucky Center for School Safety will continue to work to promote safe and healthy learning environments for students and school personnel.

School Health

- New state and federal laws require schools to plan **to improve student health**. Federal law requires school districts to adopt local wellness policies. State law requires districts to assess school nutrition and the physical activity environment and report to the local board, school councils and parents by November 30 each year. The local board must prepare a plan for improving nutrition and physical activity and present it to the community in a public meeting on or before January 31 each year. Schools districts are encouraged to incorporate this plan into their Comprehensive District Improvement Plan.
- **School councils in elementary schools** (any school with students in kindergarten through grade five or any combination of those grades) **must adopt a wellness policy**, providing for daily physical activity and encouraging healthy choices. Schools may use up to 30 minutes of the instructional day to meet this requirement. Councils must also adopt an assessment tool to measure each child's physical activity. (Federal law enacted 2004; state law enacted 2005.)
- The Kentucky Board of Education is required to specify the minimum nutritional standards for all foods and beverages that are sold to students during the school day in competition with school breakfast and lunch programs.
- "School-day-approved" beverages allowed by state law include water, 100percent fruit juices, low fat milk and anything containing no more than 10 grams of sugar per serving.
- There is a limit of 17 ounces on the size of beverages sold to elementary students and 20 ounces for middle and high school students.
- Foods prohibited include anything that is more than 32 percent sugar by weight and anything that contains more than 30percent of its calories from fat. This applies to elementary, middle and high schools.
- These items cannot be available until at least 30 minutes after the last lunch period.
- Schools that violate these rules are will be subject to fines of up to six months of revenue from food and beverage sales not including school breakfast and lunch program. These rules begin with the 2006-07 school year.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Become familiar** with your district and school discipline codes and safety plans, recognize the challenges schools face, and support your school leaders as they work to maintain safe learning environments.
- ★ **Offer** to serve on the school or district committees studying safety and discipline or health and nutrition issues.
- ★ **Visit the Kentucky Center for School Safety Web site** for the latest information and resources on school safety at <http://www.kysafeschools.org/>.

- ★ **Get a copy** of the Partnership for Successful Schools' two toolkits to use in your school. *Turn Up the Volume: The Students Speak* toolkit offers schools and school communities guidance on how to plan and carry out strategies for listening to and talking with students about how they experience school, teaching, and learning. *How Students Learn Best: In Safe and Welcoming Schools* outlines research on the relationship between safe and welcoming schools, employee strategies for creating a welcoming school environment, and characteristics of a welcoming school. See below for contact information.
- ★ **Provide** nutritious meals and snacks for your children to set an example and support the school health initiatives.
- ★ **Work** with your PTA/PTO/PTSA to plan programs that inform parents and solicit the assistance of parents in establishing a safe and orderly environment in your school.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Center for School Safety**, Eastern Kentucky University, (877) 805-4277 or visit the Web site at <http://www.kysafeschools.org/>.
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Nutrition and Health Services**, (502) 564-5625 or visit the Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Default.htm>.
- **Partnership for Successful Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Web site at <http://www.partnershipforsuccessfulschools.org/>.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/>.

TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS)

- **Technology tools** are used to enhance the learning experience for all children and prepare them to be competitive in the workforce or higher education. These technology tools include student and teacher computers, classroom printers, networks that connect technology devices together within the school and to the world, the Internet, student and teacher e-mail, productivity software for students (word processing, databases, spreadsheets, presentation), other instructional software (specific academic subjects, simulation, and modeling), and administrative software (student, teacher, administrator, school and district data for strategic decision making), telephones in the classroom, classroom video and television, remote access from home to school technology services and resources during school and after school hours, Kentucky Instructional Data System, Individual Learning Plans, Internet 2, Kentucky Virtual Library, Kentucky Virtual High School, and Kentucky Virtual University.
- The **KETS Master Plan vision** supports achieving proficiency for all Kentucky students by ensuring ease and equity of access to technology, building district capacity (student technology leadership programs, technology resource teachers), preparing students to use technology to become independent life-long learners, preparing teachers and administrators to use technology to raise student achievement, and equipping Kentucky's children to work in the Information Age. It also envisions schools as community learning centers for adult students who want to access the Kentucky Virtual University or who need retraining for another occupation through courses offered by Workforce Development. The driving force behind the Master Plan is ensuring that students' classroom performance and their preparedness for higher education, military and workforce is kept at the forefront of any educational initiative. Kentucky's technology system is focused on teaching, learning, productivity, student work, communications, decision-making and leadership.
- The Kentucky Board of Education adopted plans for technology beginning in 1992. The **2007-2012 Master Plan for Technology** identifies what has been accomplished and lists priorities for the coming years and the resources needed. It addresses four major areas of emphasis that build upon an existing solid foundation. They include the following:
 - (1) Anytime, Anywhere, Always On Differentiated Teaching and Learning
 - (2) Data Driven Decision Making for Teachers and Administrators
 - (3) Capacity Building and Enhancement of Staff and Resources
 - (4) Efficiency and Governance

RESULTS

Standards

- **Student Technology Standards.** Included in a revised version of The Program of Studies, adopted by the Kentucky Board of Education in April 2006 are student technology standards. These standards follow national standards established by the International Standards for Technology in Educations' (ISTE) National Education Technology Standards, the International Technology Education Association (ITEA), 21st Century Skills and the American Association of School Librarians/Association for Educational Communications and Technology. The three general areas of study are:

1. Information, Communication and Productivity
2. Safety and Ethical/Social Issues
3. Research, Inquiry/Problem Solving and Innovation

Performance Indicators for student technology standards have also been developed.

- The Department of Education is working to determine the best methods to both **integrate and evaluate the use of technology in all content areas** in the Program of Studies, the Core Content and eventually in Kentucky's assessment program.
- The Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) has adopted the **comprehensive teacher technology standards** for both new and experienced teachers. The standards define performance criteria for teacher evaluation and planning for professional growth. Adoption of this technology standard has changed the way teacher preparation programs at the state's colleges of education are preparing teachers.
- Kentucky was one of the first three states to participate in the development of national **administrator technology standards**, published in November 2001. Technology Standards for School Administrators have been adopted by the Education Professional Standards Board.
- **Standards for the purchase of technology** have been established and the state must bid for technology equipment to get the best price and services. This ensures equity across the state for districts that do not have strong buying power or are in rural locations. State and district funds can only be used for equipment that meets KETS standards and is on KETS contracts.

Implementation

- The implementation of the Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS) began in 1992 with a Master Plan focused on providing local school districts with a core set of technology tools to enhance teaching and learning and to collect data (finance, enrollment, attendance, etc.) to inform local, district, and state level decision making. The plan was updated in 1998, in 2001, and again for 2007 reporting on progress and establishing priorities and resources needed for full implementation. With input from students, university admissions staff, district teachers, technology resource teachers, state agency leadership and the business community, the 2007-2012 Master Plan under development provides a solid course for current and future technology implementation and comprehensive support for the goals of schools, districts and state agencies.

- School districts must match state funds dollar-for-dollar to receive state monies. Since 1992 all districts have been able to match the KETS offers of assistance, resulting in the following:
 - ✓ There is one computer for every four students in all districts in Kentucky no matter what the economic status of the community. However 75 percent of those workstations need to be replaced because of their age (six years or older), the limitations they have in running modern instructional applications, and the low reliability due to their vulnerability to viruses and frequent breakdowns.
 - ✓ 100 percent of classrooms are connected by a network internally and externally to the world; however, a majority of these connections are slow speed and need to be upgraded.
 - ✓ 100 percent of teachers have a networked computer; however, the majority of the computers are now outdated and in need of replacement.
 - ✓ 100 percent of classrooms have the capability to receive broadcasts from KET.
 - ✓ 100 percent of schools have a phone system installed capable of serving every classroom.
 - ✓ 100 percent of principals and teachers have e-mail accounts created for them.
 - ✓ 100 percent of schools and districts are using MUNIS, a standard system for student and school data and financial management, resulting in increased consistency and accuracy of data and reduced training needs for educators moving between schools or districts.
 - ✓ Every student and teacher workstation connected to the network has access to a wide variety of instructional Internet Web sites, the Kentucky Virtual Library, productivity software, instructional software, administrative software, the Kentucky Virtual High School, Kentucky Virtual University and Encyclomedia.
- **Ease and equity of access** is an underlying theme of KETS. Low- and high-income districts in Kentucky have equal access to technology funds, equal access to quality of service, and equal buying power.
- Every school district and every school has a **technology coordinator**. The Kentucky Board of Education also encourages districts to have dedicated **technology resource teachers (TRT)** who can work with teachers on technology use in the curriculum. TRTs are able to go into classrooms and work one-on-one with teachers to demonstrate use of technology in lessons plans. New policies allow districts to use state technology funds to provide this form of job-embedded professional development.
- The **Student Technology Leadership Program™ (STLP)** was initiated in 1994 and is currently in place in over 1,000 schools. It is a school-based program allowing students to apply their technology skills to solve school and community problems. (See research report below.)

STLP has added a State Championship. Schools may attend this event in the spring. Schools can register students to compete in products, services, performance and projects categories in order to demonstrate what they know and can do with technology. The best technology achievement is recognized in the annual awards program. The first year of the State Championship more than 2400 students participated representing 231 schools and 84 districts.

- A May 2004 report for the Kentucky Department of Education by Gartner found that:
 - ✓ Kentucky has significantly improved placement of technology in Kentucky schools;
 - ✓ Kentucky schools perform above average and sometimes in the top schools in the country in terms of student teacher access and use of technology
 - ✓ Kentucky has made significant strides in adopting forward-looking management strategies that

- ✓ have saved the state millions of dollars in technology management, maintenance and support
 - ✓ Kentucky's Office of Education Technology operates at a higher efficiency than most similar organizations in most technology areas.
- According to *Education Week's Technology Counts 2006*, Kentucky is in the top ten states and received an overall grade of B based on an average score in three categories. Kentucky received an A in capacity to use technology, an A-minus in use of technology and a C for access to technology. These categories were evaluated in order to assign an overall state grade for technology leadership. On a national level most state's performance is average with the typical state receiving a C-plus.
- In September 2002, a national report entitled "The Digital Disconnect: The Widening Gap Between Internet-savvy Students and Their School" evaluated the school Internet use in instruction through the eyes of students. Students stated they are becoming frustrated that the principals and teachers in the school system have not yet modernized their teaching approach fast enough to sufficiently take full advantage of electronic educational resources in the classroom. This included access and use of Internet web sites and electronic communication tools (such as student email). The study stated "Educators have a choice: Either quickly adapt, or they will be dragged into a new learning environment."
- Key findings from the study (<http://www.pewinternet.org/reports/index.asp>) include the following: Internet-savvy students rely on the Internet to help them do their schoolwork—and for good reason. Students said they complete their schoolwork more quickly; they are less likely to get stymied by material they don't understand; their papers and projects are more likely to draw upon up-to-date sources and state-of-the-art knowledge; and, they are better at juggling their school assignments and extracurricular activities when they use the Internet. In essence, they told us that the Internet helps them navigate their way through school and spend more time learning in depth about what is most important to them personally.
- According to the Kentucky Long-Term Policy Research Center's study, "Kentucky High School Students and Their Future Education Plans," Kentucky's investment in education technology in public schools, which has been a component of KERA from its inception, seems to be reaping rewards as far as students' facility with software is concerned. Of course, given the rate at which computers have spread to homes across Kentucky and the rest of America, many students would be learning these skills even if schools had nothing more than antiquated typewriting equipment. Yet these survey results suggest students are learning many key skills in schools, and that schools can help close the digital divide that may exist between homes that can afford computer equipment and Internet services and those that cannot.
- **Full funding of the KETS Master Plan** - KDE annually calculates the amount it will take to minimally operate, maintain, and incrementally replace existing technology investments while also acquiring new and emerging technology in the districts. This is referred to as unmet need. This annual state-wide unmet need is approximately \$122 million. This total is divided by the state-wide Average Daily Attendance (ADA) to determine each district's unmet need on a per student basis. In spite of the substantial financial investment by federal, state, and local entities, full funding fell short by \$300 million during the previous six years. Therefore there remains a total unmet need of approximately \$422 million.
- The 2006 legislature budgeted \$19.5 million for KETS in 2007 and 2008. In addition, they provided \$50 million in bonds over the next two years for replacement of outdated workstations in schools. Approximately \$29 million was made available over the next two years for the next generation high-

speed education telecommunications network, Kentucky Education Network (KEN). KEN will connect all K-12 public school districts and improve the capacity of the Education Cabinet agencies. Approximately \$10 million in bonds was allotted to provide the most modern system to ensure the efficient collection and management of student information, including a unique student identifier, at the school, district and state levels. Approximately \$10 million was provided in State School Facility Constructions Funds for new construction or renovations. These funds can go towards (1) internal wiring of voice, video, and data lines within the school, (2) phone systems, and (3) video projectors or televisions. Finally, \$5 million in coal severance funds was made available to coal producing counties through for technology projects, for grid computing, and for additional KETS Offers of Assistance in the 59 qualifying counties.





Information for the Public

- Parents and citizens can access school, district and state data from several state Web sites including:
The Kentucky Department of Education, <http://www.education.ky.gov>
The Council on Postsecondary Education, <http://cpe.ky.gov/>
- School performance data is also available on two national Web sites. Charts show comparisons to comparable schools, which are also listed on the site. Visit Just for the Kids at <http://www.just4kids.org> and Standard & Poors' at <http://www.schoolresults.org>.

WHAT'S NEW?

- The Kentucky Department of Education will be using a unique student identifier number for each student to better track student data.
- KIDS - Kentucky is one of 14 states awarded a federal grant to develop and implement a statewide, longitudinal data system to make student, assessment, and financial data more readily available to appropriate stakeholders. The project, called **Kentucky Instructional Data System (KIDS)**, will support decision-making at all levels and will make reporting of the federal No Child Left Behind easier.
- **Individual Learning Plan (ILP)** replaces the Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) and is now available on the Internet. Kentucky 8th through 12th grade students can explore careers that match their skills and interests, create education plans, establish personal goals and revisit these as they progress through school, explore colleges and postsecondary opportunities, and collect personal information like assessment results, demographic information, and educational history.
- **Internet 2** is a research and development consortium led by over 200 U.S. universities working in partnership with industry and government to develop and deploy advanced network applications and technologies, accelerating the creation of tomorrow's Internet. This will enable, via high bandwidth and high performance, collaboration among researchers, instructors, students, and interactive access to information and resources in a way not possible on today's Internet.

WHAT TO EXPECT

-  All school districts must submit a Technology Activity Report which summarizes their technology purchasing activities for a year. Each district must conduct technology planning which complies with the state master plan.
-  Teachers and administrators at the schools need to continue to emphasize **professional development** to learn more about the use of technology for educational purposes.
-  District administrators continue to maximize the use of the computerized student, school and financial management data systems. This affects school council decisions, budgeting and purchasing.
-  Expect ongoing changes in the KETS design and growth in utilization, recurring costs, and support needs.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Ask** questions to find out what is happening with technology in your school or school district:
 - ✓ What computer programs are used and what do students use computers for?
 - ✓ How many computers are available to students and how many hours do students work on them?
 - ✓ Are student workstations located in every classroom for use by all students in all subjects, or in computer labs limiting use to a few subject areas?
 - ✓ Does your child have frequent access to tools needed when they graduate (e-mail, Internet Web sites, MS Word, MS Excel, database products, presentation products)?
 - ✓ Is there a Student Technology Leadership Program in your school and how can students join?
 - ✓ Does your school have high-speed connections to the Internet and do all students have e-mail addresses and access? If not, why?
 - ✓ Does the school have a technology resource teacher who can work one-on-one to train teachers in use of technology tools for instruction?
 - ✓ How can you see or hear the electronic information available about your child while visiting the school, from home telephones, and from home computers? Where can you find information about your school and district?
 - ✓ Does the school allow the community to use their technology resources after school hours for the virtual university or other electronic learning opportunities? If not, why?
- ★ **Talk** with students about technology. Ask them how much time they spend on computers and how computers are used for learning in their school.
- ★ To learn more, **review** the district technology plan and comprehensive school improvement plans. Become active in your school's planning, and advocate for technology that is thoroughly integrated into the curriculum of your school by focusing on:
 - ✓ staff competencies and professional development for teachers and administrators
 - ✓ integration of technology with learner outcomes and core content
 - ✓ role of technology in assisting students to achieve at higher levels
- ★ **Inform yourself and talk** with your legislators about technology needs in your school and district.

- ★ **Visit** the Kentucky Department of Education Web site to learn more about technology and consolidated planning. This site provides more information about up-to-date KETS negotiated prices and KETS standards. If you don't have access to a computer, try using one at a school or local public library.
- ★ If you have computer expertise, **volunteer** to tutor students, help develop the local district or school plan, or participate with the Student Technology Leadership Program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Education Technology** at (502) 564-2020 ext. 0, or visit the Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Default.htm>.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/>.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- A minimum of four days each year of **professional development** is required for teachers and other certified employees. Time is set aside in the school calendar for that purpose. School districts may plan one of those days. School councils determine how to use the remaining three days, which must be consistent with the school's comprehensive improvement plan and be based on disaggregated student performance data and teachers' individual growth plans.
- The law requires that 65 percent of a district's **professional development funds** be allocated to school councils. Teachers, parents, and the principal at the school determine what additional training is needed for them to improve student performance, based on an analysis of the achievement data for their students.
- New superintendents complete a **training program and assessment center** process established by the state Department of Education. They have one year to complete the process. Finance and school law are two primary topics of this training.
- The **Effective Instructional Leadership Act (EILA)** creates a statewide program to improve and maintain the quality of instructional leadership in Kentucky. All staff in leadership positions that require certification, such as principals and other administrators, are required to have 21 hours of leadership training annually in a program focused on becoming better instructional leaders. There is a penalty for non-compliance. Those who evaluate certified staff must have six hours each year in the effective evaluation of teachers.
- **Superintendents** are required to complete 21 hours of leadership training annually under provisions of the Effective Instructional Leadership Act in order to be employed as a superintendent in Kentucky. There are penalties for non-compliance.
- The **Center for Middle School Academic Achievement** was established to improve content knowledge and instructional practices of middle school teachers through professional development, technical assistance, and research. It is housed jointly at Eastern Kentucky University and Murray State University.
- **Teacher academies**, funded with \$1.6 million in 2006-07 and 2007-08, provide training sessions focused on core disciplines. They were offered by the Kentucky Department of Education in cooperation with colleges and universities.
- Teachers who apply for **National Board Certification (NBC)** are eligible for support as they work on their application. Those who are successful receive additional pay as long as they remain in the classroom or if they serve as a mentor teacher. In 2006 there were 899 NBC teachers in Kentucky compared to 145 in 2002.
- Teachers may continue to use **flexible in-service programs** to meet their four-day requirement for professional development but they must use this time for programs that relate to their individual

growth plan, content area, or school improvement plans. Use of the flexible option requires local board approval.

- **Teacher evaluation and growth plans** are required of each school district and are based on standards established by the Department of Education. In 2001-02, the department began conducting on-site visits to review these plans in no less than 15 school districts each year. Districts found deficient receive technical assistance.
- The Department of Education is required to maintain an **electronic bulletin board** with information about professional development opportunities.



WHAT'S NEW?

- ➔ The 2006 legislature budgeted \$3 million in 2006-07 and \$6.9 million in 2007-08 for mathematics achievement and the Center for Mathematics, which will be housed at Northern Kentucky University. This will provide resources for professional development and a focus on math education.
- ➔ The 2006 legislature provided a significant increase in funding for reading programs, which includes professional development opportunities for teachers. Funding in 2005-06 was \$11.1 million and will increase to \$20.5 million in 2006-07 and \$23.5 million in 2007-08.

RESULTS

- **The state has provided districts with \$23 per pupil** per year for professional development but in 2003 the legislature included professional development funds in a “flexible focus” category, allowing districts to use some of these funds for other purposes. Additional funds have been allocated for more specific purposes. (See above.)
- Every district and every school has a **professional development plan** as part of their comprehensive improvement plan.
- The **Kentucky Leadership Academy**, a two-year training program, was created to provide additional professional development for principals, other administrators, and teachers. The Kentucky Association of School Administrators operates the program.
- There is an increased **integration of technology** in professional development through academic villages, teacher electronic networks, and the annual Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference, held in March each year.
- The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) has a grant to participate in the **State Action for Education Leadership Project (SAELP)** to assess school leadership needs and find ways to attract, prepare and support high quality principals, superintendents and other school leaders. State participants have included representatives from KDE staff, university college faculty, school district leaders, legislators, Governor’s office, Education Cabinet, Education Professional Standards Board, Council on Postsecondary Education and other interest groups. Beginning in the fall of 2006, seven Kentucky schools will participate in a three-year pilot project designed to help school principals focus their attention on curriculum, instruction and assessment. School Administrative Managers (SAMS), will focus on daily management issues.

WHAT TO EXPECT

-  Expect professional development offerings to improve and to focus on content, instruction, and its link to assessment with a focus on closing achievement gaps. Teachers have no time to waste on poor in-service programs. They need to be selective in choosing high quality professional development that improves knowledge and teaching skills.
-  Watch for professional development to begin changing from “in-service days” to new and different activities such as study groups, classroom research, observing other teachers teaching, networking with other teachers, and being observed and critiqued by other teachers.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Ask** teachers and principals the following questions: Does professional development:
 - ✓ Connect to improving student learning?
 - ✓ Meet the needs of teachers and administrators?
 - ✓ Address learning needs identified by data on student achievement?
 - ✓ Provide time and follow-up support?
 - ✓ Model effective teaching for all students?
 - ✓ Use principles of adult learning?
 - ✓ Increase teachers’ knowledge of subject matter?
 - ✓ Emphasize ongoing improvement in teaching?
 - ✓ Improve skills, leadership, and teamwork?
 - ✓ Involve teachers in decisions?
- ★ **Ask** if you can sit in on professional development sessions that interest you.
- ★ **Understand** that teachers need time without students to plan, study, discuss, and learn improved teaching methods.
- ★ **Call** the Partnership for Successful Schools. **Ask** for a copy of *Building and Sustaining Learning Communities: A Professional Development Resource Guide*, which outlines characteristics and models of effective professional development. **Request** copies of their research reports and **share** them with your school council and educators in your school. See below for contact information.
- ★ **Request** the series *Quality Teaching* prepared by the Partnership for Successful Schools for the *Lexington Herald-Leader*. Share them with your local newspaper.
- ★ **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask school board members what they plan to do to support improved professional development in your district.

Ask your school council if it has a professional development committee and how it plans to use its professional development funds. Volunteer to serve on the committee that makes those recommendations to the council.
- ★ **Write** to your elected officials with specific examples of successes or problems. See page 103 for information on contacting state legislators.

- ★ **Participate** in the scholastic audit process. For more information visit the department's Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Default.htm> under scholastic audit.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Leadership and School Improvement** at (502) 564-2116 or visit the Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Default.htm>.
- **Partnership for Successful Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org or visit the Web site <http://www.parentershipforsuccessfulschools.org/>.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/>.

TEACHER PREPARATION AND THE EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BOARD

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- The mission of Kentucky's Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) is to ensure a quality educator for every professional public school position through the establishment and enforcement of rigorous, achievable standards for obtaining and maintaining certification. The EPSB is responsible for:
 - ✓ **establishing educator training and certification standards** for obtaining and maintaining a teaching certificate
 - ✓ **setting standards for** approving and evaluating educator **preparation programs** at colleges, universities, and local school districts for teachers and other professional school personnel
 - ✓ **issuing, renewing, suspending, and revoking the certificates** of professional school personnel
 - ✓ **maintaining data** and submitting reports on trends in teacher certification and employment
 - ✓ developing guidelines and **investigating reports of educator misconduct** on the part of teachers and administrators; board members must receive training (along with their investigators) on educator misconduct
 - ✓ setting policies for **alternative training programs**; providing programs resulting in certification for experts and professionals who have college but not education degrees to become classroom teachers and administrators
 - ✓ developing a **professional code of ethics** as required by law
- Additional responsibilities were legislated in 2000 including **broader responsibility** for educator preparation and professional development including:
 - ✓ setting **accreditation standards** that reflect national standards for colleges of education
 - ✓ **discontinuing approval of colleges of education** that do not meet standards or whose students fail to meet criteria established by the board
 - ✓ conducting an **annual review of diversity** in teacher education programs and providing assistance to schools in addressing diversity
 - ✓ defining information needed to make good policy decisions about the teaching profession
 - ✓ **defining out-of-field teaching** for purposes in Kentucky, collecting information on the number of out-of-field teachers and providing that information to the Department of Education
 - ✓ **informing the public** on the status of teaching
 - ✓ creating guidelines for and overseeing **alternative routes to certification** for teachers and administrators
 - ✓ promoting one or more **innovative alternative preparation programs** through a college or university
- The Education Professional **Standards Board** members, appointed by the Governor, consists of nine teachers, two school administrators, one representative of local school boards, three representatives of higher education, and two ex officio members—the Commissioner of Education and the President of the Council on Postsecondary Education.

- Standards for new teachers, experienced teachers, new and experienced counselors, administrators (principals and superintendents) interdisciplinary early childhood education, national environmental education, and safety education have been established by the Education Professional Standards Board. Work in Kentucky and with a consortium of other states continues in the development of assessments to ensure that teachers and administrators have met these standards. The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Administrator Standards have been adopted as Kentucky's standards for administrators.
- In January 1998, colleges and universities began new **performance-based preparation programs** designed to prepare teachers with the knowledge and skills specified in the New Teacher Standards and to achieve Kentucky's goals for students and schools.
- The Federal No Child Left Behind law required states to assure that every child has a highly qualified teacher by the end of the 2005-06 school year. To be considered highly qualified, a teacher must have:
 - ✓ a bachelor's degree;
 - ✓ full state certification; and
 - ✓ demonstration of subject matter competency, including one or more of the following:
 - a college major in the subject taught;
 - credits equivalent to a major;
 - a passing grade on a Praxis test in the content area;
 - demonstration that he/she knows the subject through a High, Objective, Uniform State Standard Evaluation (HOUSSE) developed by the state;
 - an advanced certificate from the state; or
 - an advanced degree (master's or doctorate in the subject).

States are required to determine how many teachers are highly qualified, adopt goals and plans to ensure that each child has a highly qualified teacher, and report their plans and progress to the public.

- To teach in Kentucky schools, teachers must achieve professional certification by successfully completing a college teacher preparation program and a one-year internship. There are seven **alternate routes to certification** which candidates who hold a bachelor's degree, but who have not completed the necessary teacher education program, can use to become certified. Nearly 90percent of all districts have at least one alternative route certified teacher.
 - ✓ **Exceptional work experience (Option 1):** Persons with 10 years or more of exceptional work experience and a bachelor's degree with a grade point average of 2.5 or higher may be certified as high school teachers in the area of their expertise with Standards Board approval.
 - ✓ **Local district training program (Option 2):** Districts work together with colleges or universities to train teachers on the job. Candidates must meet certain qualifications. Jefferson County Public Schools is the only district using this option.
 - ✓ **College faculty provision (Option 3):** University or college teachers may receive certification to teach at the high school level if they have a master's or doctoral degree in the subject for which they seek certification and five years of full-time teaching experience.

- ✓ **Adjunct Instructor (Option 4):** A person who has expertise in areas such as music, art, foreign languages, drama, science, and other specialty areas may be employed in a part-time position by a local board of education. Adjunct instructor certification is not considered "full state certification" and does not meet the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.
- ✓ **Veterans of the armed forces option (Option 5):** Veterans honorably discharged after six years or more with a bachelor's degree in the subject to be taught, a grade point average of 2.5 or higher or an advanced degree, and passing scores on subject matter tests, may be certified to teach.
- ✓ **University-based option (Option 6):** The EPSB is authorized to approve alternative route training programs at Kentucky colleges or universities. Approximately 85percent of alternate route certifications are via this option. Programs for teachers have been approved at Asbury, Bellarmine University, Campbellsville University, Eastern Kentucky, Georgetown College, Morehead State, Murray State, Northern Kentucky, Spalding University, the University of Kentucky, University of the Cumberlands, the University of Louisville, Union College and Western Kentucky. Northern Kentucky University now has an umbrella program. In addition, Western has a program for alternate routes to principal certification, and Eastern and Murray have alternative programs for principals, superintendents, and other administrators.
- ✓ **University institute option (Option 7):** In 2004, the Kentucky General Assembly approved an additional alternative route to certification that allows persons in a field other than education to teach in elementary, middle, or secondary programs. A candidate receives a one-year Temporary Provisional Certificate, renewable for a maximum of two additional years, with approval of EPSB, and must complete a preparatory institute prior to the issuance of the certificate or during the first year of certification. A Professional Certificate is issued upon the teacher candidate's successful completion of the institute and the internship requirements. Northern Kentucky University is Kentucky's first university to offer this route with two candidates in 2006.
- The **Kentucky Teacher Internship Program (KTIP)** provides support and an assessment for teachers in their first year of teaching. Mentors offer advice, information, and support with an emphasis on professional growth. This process is designed to assist new teachers to reflect on and analyze their teaching to become as effective as possible. All teachers, no matter how they obtain an education, must successfully complete this internship program in order to be certified in Kentucky. The **Kentucky Principal Internship Program (KPIP)** offers a similar support system for new principals and assistant principals. KPIP was reinstated in 2005. Contact EPSB at: www.kyepsb.net/ for more information.

Stipends are available for resource teachers who mentor teacher interns and cooperating teachers who supervise student teachers. In addition, up to six hours of tuition-free classes may be available for these teachers each year. Check with local universities for information on this program.




Between 1998-99 and 2005-06, 3883 teachers received certification through one of Kentucky's alternative certification programs.

- Kentucky teachers are paid based on their level of education and years of experience or rank. Beginning teachers start at Rank III and the highest level and paid teachers are Rank I.

- Teachers maintain certification by successfully completing continuing education. Within 10 years, teachers must complete a master's degree or an approved "fifth year program." The board has also established a system to ensure high-quality continuing education and allow rank change through planned professional development in place of graduate course work.
- Professional development may be used to replace up to 12 graduate hours in the fifth-year (Rank II) program with university approval. (Within 10 years, teachers must complete a fifth-year program to continue teaching in Kentucky. This can be a master's degree or completion of a certain number of hours of advanced work.) The Experienced Teacher Standards are used as the basis for all fifth-year programs.
- The **Continuing Education Option** for rank change (CEO), based on the Experienced Teacher Standards, is another way teachers can move into Rank I or Rank II. The CEO is a rigorous portfolio and performance-based process that must address student achievement. The CEO utilizes quality job-embedded professional development in a blended learning environment. District-based trainers work online and in bi-monthly meetings with peer cohorts as teachers progress through the 12- to 48-month process. As of December 2005, more than 300 teachers had obtained either a Rank I or Rank II with the CEO program. For more information contact EPSB at: www.kyepsb.net/.
- Kentucky teachers who hold a Rank II teaching certificate and complete the extensive year-long series of performance-based assessments can be certified as a **National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT)** to qualify for Rank I. National Board certification is a one to three year process. In the past, teachers qualified for Rank I with 30 hours of college credit in addition to a master's degree. EPSB is responsible for overseeing the Teachers' National Incentive Trust Fund in accordance with: 16 KAR 1:040. Educators interested in becoming a NBCT can visit: <http://www.nbpts.org>
- In 2002 the legislature passed a law to **attract and retain good teachers** in Kentucky. Beginning in 2004 it provided a salary increase for teachers equal to the cost-of-living adjustment for state workers. It allows up to five school districts to pilot different pay programs to attract teachers to hard-to-fill positions and encourage people to consider teaching as a profession. It establishes a forgivable loan program to encourage teachers and others to get certification in hard-to-fill areas such as special education. It also requires a study of the effectiveness of teacher and principal internship programs. In 2006 the legislature provided additional funding to raise teacher salaries 2 percent in 2006-07 and \$3,000 in 2007-08.
- Credentials and certificate status of individual Kentucky teachers is available on the Education Professional Standards Board Web site under **Kentucky Educator's Certification Inquiry (KECI)**. Visit the website at <http://www.kyepsb.net> and click on "How Do I Check Educator's Credentials?" This website service is available to the general public at no cost.
- The EPSB may issue a conditional one year certificate to teacher candidates who fail to meet the PRAXIS exam's minimum scores for certification. In the past, these candidates frequently have taught under an emergency certificate at the district's request.
- The EPSB publishes the Kentucky Educator Preparation Program (KEPP) annual report card as required by state law. The Report Card reflects the quality of teacher and administrator preparation programs throughout the Commonwealth on indicators deemed important by the Governor, the General Assembly, the Kentucky Board of Education, higher education, teachers and administrators, parents, the EPSB, and the public-at-large. The reports are available at <http://www.keppreportcard.org/>.

- The EPSB is a partner in a website developed to address the needs of Kentucky educators by providing timely, efficient professional development through online modules designed to enhance professional growth. Teachers and administrators can access much-needed information from home or school, any time, at their convenience. Visit the website at <http://www.KyEducators.org>.
- In 2005, 166 Kentucky teachers were certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards bringing Kentucky's total to 899 **National Board Certified Teachers** (NBCTs). NBCT candidates complete rigorous portfolio entries and testing requirements. Last year only 43 percent of teachers who applied in Kentucky were successful (the national passing rate was 38 percent.) The goal of the Kentucky Legislature and the Education Professional Standards Board is to have one NBCT in every public school by 2020. EPSB is responsible for overseeing the Teachers' National Incentive Trust Fund. Educators interested in becoming a NBCT can visit: <http://www.nbpts.org>.
- The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), with other partners, is required to have a statewide recruitment plan to encourage qualified persons to enter the teaching profession and seek employment in Kentucky.
- The Kentucky Educator Placement Service (KEPS), an on-line job application service/placement system, is operated by the Kentucky Department of Education to help teachers find teaching positions. Go to www.education.ky.gov and search for KEPS.
- Between 1990 and 2005, the Education Professional Standards Board opened an average of 200 cases of educator misconduct per year. Since its beginning, the EPSB has revoked approximately 200 certificates and suspended more than 200. The number of disciplinary cases has increased and it is anticipated that there will be a record number of cases opened in 2006. The increase in cases opened is a direct result of the "Duty to Report" seminars and ethics training conducted by EPSB's legal staff which means that superintendents are more fully informed of their responsibility to report all teacher misconduct to the Board. In 92percent of cases heard by the EPSB, remedial training is ordered.
- In the 2005-06 school year, 961 **emergency certificates** were issued compared to 1,811 in 2001-02. The number of emergency certificates is declining. The majority of emergency certificates are issued to fill vacancies in special education.
- The number of "**out of field**" teachers, those teaching in areas where they do not have certification, has declined to less than 1percent.

WHAT TO EXPECT

-  There is a growing interest in quality teaching in Kentucky and the need to recruit and retain effective teachers as the state works to reach proficiency in student achievement. Research shows that the quality of teaching is one of the most important factors in student learning.
-  Listen for more conversation about teacher and leadership preparation as colleges and universities work to improve their programs to better prepare educators to reach higher student achievement.
-  Watch for more regional P-16 councils to form and work together to improve education.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ If your school or school district has an urgent need for teachers in special areas, **suggest** the development of an alternative training program or the use of one of the other alternative routes to certification.
- ★ **Speak well** of teaching as a profession. **Encourage talented young people**, both male and female, of all racial or ethnic backgrounds, and from all regions of Kentucky, to consider teaching as a career. Recognize good teaching in your school and school district.
- ★ **Inform others** in your community by getting copies of the Partnership for Successful Schools' series, *Quality Teaching*, prepared in collaboration with the Education Professional Standards Board for the *Lexington Herald-Leader*. **Ask** your local paper to run them. Share them with other parents in your school. See below for contact information.
- ★ **Ask** college professors from arts and sciences, as well as colleges of education, what they are doing to improve the way teachers are prepared.
- ★ **Report** persons holding teaching certificates (teachers, administrators, principals, superintendents) that you believe to be guilty of immorality, misconduct, or incompetence serious enough to have their teaching certificate revoked. Contact your local school district superintendent or the Education Professional Standards Board at (502) 564-4606.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Education Professional Standards Board** at (502) 564-4606 or visit the Website at <http://www.kyepsb.net/>.
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Educator Recruitment and Retention** at (502) 564-1479 or visit the Website at <http://www.education.ky.gov> and search Quick Links for Educator Recruitment and Retention for Kentucky Educator Placement Service (KEPS); click on Max Data System in left column.
- **Partnership for Successful Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org or visit the Website at www.partnershipforsuccessfulschools.org
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Website at www.prichardcommittee.org.

SCHOOL FINANCE

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- **Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK)** is the basic funding formula used to allocate state dollars to school districts.
- Districts are guaranteed a certain allotment for each student. The **base guarantee per pupil** for 2006-07 is \$3,508 and for 2007-08, \$3,822. Additional funds are provided for exceptional students, economically-disadvantaged students, transportation, students who do not speak English, and students served in home and hospital settings. The base SEEK per pupil allotment varies depending on the differing needs of the districts.
- **Local districts participate** in the SEEK program by raising no less than 30 cents per \$100 assessed property evaluation or its equivalent. The state provides additional funds to meet the minimum guaranteed amount.
- **Tier 1** allows districts to raise an additional 15 percent of revenue above the base without a referendum, which is equalized to 150 percent of the state's average per pupil assessment.
- **Tier 2** allows districts to raise an additional 30 percent of revenue above the base plus Tier 1, subject to referendum. This is not matched by the state and sets the cap or maximum difference in spending allowed by law.
- Local districts must levy no less than an additional 5 cents (or its equivalent) to participate in the **Facilities Support Program of Kentucky (FSPK)** and the School Facilities Construction Commission program. **Fast-growing districts** meeting certain criteria, may levy an additional five cent tax for facilities.
- **Additional state funding** is provided to school districts for:
 - ✓ preschool programs
 - ✓ extended school services
 - ✓ programs for gifted and talented students
 - ✓ professional development
 - ✓ technology
 - ✓ family resource and youth services centers
 - ✓ vocational/technical programs and transportation
 - ✓ textbooks
 - ✓ school safety programs
 - ✓ gifted and talented education

Other funds are available through grants for reading programs and math achievement.

- School districts are required to provide funds to each school council based on a **school council allocation formula**, adopted by the Kentucky Board of Education.

WHAT'S NEW?

- **Previous budget shortfalls** during 2003-04 resulted in reductions in spending for several education programs, but the 2006 legislature restored most of those programs to previous funding levels with significant new dollars for the following.
 - ✓ **Preschool funding** was increased by \$23.5 million in 2006-07 and 2007-08 to \$75.1 million per year to raise eligibility for 4-year-old children from 130 percent of poverty to 150 percent. All 3- and 4-year-old children with disabilities will continue to be served regardless of family income.
 - ✓ **Technology** increased by \$50 million in bonded funds for 2006-07 to upgrade outdated workstations; approximately \$29 million over the next two years for the next generation high-speed education telecommunications network; and approximately \$10 million in bonds to provide an efficient system to collect and manage student information, including a unique student identifier.
 - ✓ **Funding for reading programs** was increased from \$11.1 million in 2005-06 to \$20.6 million in 2006-07 and \$23.6 million in 2007-08.
 - ✓ Funds for **math achievement and a new math center**, remained the same in 2006-07 (\$3.9 million) and increased to \$6.9 million in 2007-08.
- In addition, the legislature provided funds for:
 - ✓ **two additional days of instruction in 2007-08** for a total of 177 days and
 - ✓ significant **salary increases** for teachers and support staff.
- A **complete school district financial report** must be made available to the public each year. In the past it had to be published in the newspaper with the largest circulation in the county. A change in the budget bill allows districts the option of putting this on the internet or in the local library, as long as notice is published in the local paper.

RESULTS

- **SEEK** base funding, 1990-91 \$2,305 per pupil and is budgeted at \$3,822 for 2007-08. However in constant dollars based on 2005 estimated cost of living figures, the base only increased from \$3,390 to \$3,673 during that same time period.
- **Kentucky ranks 34th in the nation in per pupil expenditures** in average daily attendance, at \$7,728 in 2002-03. In 1989-90 Kentucky was 42nd at \$3,745. The national per pupil expenditure for 2002-03 is \$8,600 (Source: Digest of Education Statistics, 2005; National Center for Education Statistics, Washington, D.C.)
- Teacher salaries on average have increased from \$26,292 in 1989-90 to \$39,831 in 2003-04. The national average in 2003-04 was \$46,597. Kentucky ranked 38th in the nation in 1989-90, moved up to 29th in 1996-97 and was 34th in 2003-04. (Source: American Federation of Teachers)
- **Program Flexibility** continues to be available for districts for professional development, extended school services, preschool, textbooks and safe schools funds. Districts may use these funds for other programs as long as they meet the program mandates and serve the intended students.
- Since 1999, **state lottery proceeds have been** used to support Kentucky Education Excellence Scholarships (KEES) and other tuition grant programs (about \$609 million), childhood reading and

adult literacy programs (\$18 million), and Kentucky Housing Corporation's Affordable Housing Trust Fund (\$21 million).

- The **Council for Better Schools**, an organization of 164 school districts, filed a lawsuit in 2003 claiming the state is not providing schools sufficient funds to help each and every child be successful. Three adequacy studies reported Kentucky would need between \$740 million and \$1.8 billion additional dollars to provide an adequate education for Kentucky's children. Overall state funding for education has increased from \$1.7 billion in 1990-91, the first year after school reform was enacted, to \$3.8 billion in 2007-08. These figures, adjusted for inflation are \$2.5 billion to \$3.7 billion for the same years. Much of this funding has been needed to keep up with inflation and the cost of salaries and benefits like health care. This lawsuit is still pending in the courts.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Attend** school council and school board meetings and ask about funding priorities.
- ★ **Volunteer** to serve on you school finance committee.
- ★ **Talk** with your state legislators about funding needs for your schools. Let them know with specific examples how your school is dealing with the budget cuts. See page 103.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Department of Education, Office of District Support Services, Division of Finance** at (502) 564-3846 or visit the Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Default.htm>.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/>.

GOVERNANCE

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- Kentucky school law provides for **shared leadership** with certain decisions made at each level — state, district, and school. In Kentucky, many decisions are made at the school level. For example, school-based decision making allows teachers and parents the opportunity to make decisions about learning for their students. See page 60 for more information.
- The **Kentucky Board of Education** is responsible for directing policy for elementary and secondary education. Members are appointed by the governor for staggered four-year terms. They must have no less than an associate's degree or its equivalent. Appointees must be approved by the Kentucky General Assembly.
- The **Council on Postsecondary Education** coordinates and provides oversight for Kentucky's public colleges and universities and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS). The board for KCTCS provides coordination for Kentucky community and technical colleges.
- A state **P-16 Council** (preschool through college) has been created by the Kentucky Board of Education and the Council on Postsecondary Education to coordinate efforts to improve education at all levels. Regional P-16 Councils or Councils of Partners have been created in some regions of Kentucky and can receive matching funds from the Council on Postsecondary Education for their work.
- The **Office of Education Accountability** in the Legislative Research Commission has the responsibility for monitoring the education system and conducting research as requested by the legislature. A toll-free number, (800) 242-0520, is available to report concerns or ask questions.
- Kentucky school law includes the following provisions for elementary and secondary schools:
 - ✓ In most cases, a **superintendent's relatives** cannot work in his or her school district. This rule does not apply to a relative who is an employee of the district for at least 36 months before a superintendent assumes office, or to an employee who marries a relative of the superintendent as long as he or she is qualified for that job. A superintendent's spouse who has at least 20 years of service as a school employee may be employed in the district.
 - ✓ **Principals cannot employ relatives** at their schools, but relatives employed before July 1990 are exempt under current law. Spouses are exempt if:
 - the spouse was employed in that school in the 1989-90 school year and
 - there is no other position in the district for which the spouse is certified or
 - the spouse is in a district where there is no more than one elementary, middle and/or high school.

- ✓ If a principal's spouse is employed in that principal's school, he or she must be evaluated by another administrator.
- ✓ **School board members** can not have a relative employed by the school district defined as father, mother, sister, brother, husband, wife, son, daughter, uncle, aunt, son-in-law or daughter-in-law. In addition, local school board members must:
 - be at least twenty-four (24) years of age;
 - be a citizen of Kentucky for three (3) years before the election;
 - be a voter in the district or division in which they serve;
 - have achieved at least a twelfth (12th) grade education or GED;
 - not have a contractual relationship with the school district for the sale of goods or services.
 - not be an employee or officer of city or county government.
- ✓ **Campaign contributions** to school board candidates are limited to \$100 from individuals and \$200 from organizations for each election.
- ✓ **School board members** cannot ask school employees for campaign contributions or services.
- ✓ When there is a **vacancy on a local school board**, the state commissioner of education appoints members to serve until the next election. A law passed in 2004, prohibits a school board seat to be filled by a write-in vote when there are no candidates on the ballot. The Commissioner of Education would fill the vacancy in that situation.
- ✓ The **local school board hires the superintendent** with advice from a screening committee that includes two teachers, a principal, a local school board member, and a parent. A minority parent is added if there is no minority on the committee and the district has eight percent or more minority students enrolled. The school board makes the final decision and may pick someone not recommended by the committee.
- ✓ The school board can, by four-fifths vote and approval of the state education commissioner, break a **superintendent's contract** for cause.
- ✓ The **local school board** establishes district-wide goals for education; hires the superintendent; decides when and where to build new school facilities; provides services; manages all school funds and property for the district; and sets rules and regulations for school property management. It transacts business for the district, sets tax rates, and establishes qualifications for all employees.
- ✓ **Local school boards and superintendents** create guidelines and general requirements for school operations. School-based decision making councils make curricular and instructional (what is taught and how) decisions for their school. The district and board provide support and assistance for councils to do their work.
- ✓ The Kentucky Board of Education is authorized to **waive** any of its **regulations** when a school district or school shows it can produce the same results without the regulation, or when hardship or just cause is a factor.

WHAT'S NEW?

- New state and federal laws require schools to plan **to improve student health**. Federal law requires school districts to adopt local wellness policies. State law requires districts to assess the nutrition and the physical activity environment and report to the local board, school councils and parents by November 30 each year. The local board must prepare a plan for improving nutrition and physical activity and present it to the community in a public meeting on or before January 31 each year. Schools districts are encouraged to incorporate this plan into their Comprehensive District Improvement Plan. School councils in schools with students in grades kindergarten through grade five must adopt a wellness policy, providing for daily physical activity and encouraging healthy choices. (Federal law enacted 2004; state law enacted 2005.)

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ If your school has a school-based decision making council, **run** for a school council seat, volunteer to serve on a council committee, or offer to help the PTA/PTO/PTSA with elections. If there is no PTA in your school, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office at (502) 226-6607.
- ★ **Encourage** good candidates to run for school board offices or apply for appointment when vacancies occur between elections. Consider running for a school board seat.
- ★ To **learn more about service as a school board member**, **call** the Partnership for Successful Schools at (859) 455-9595 and ask for a copy of the report prepared with the Kentucky School Boards Association and the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce called *Difficult Ground: Community Leaders and School Board Service in Kentucky*. Also request a copy of "Want to Make a Difference ..." a booklet that provides guidelines for people interested in running for school board seats or supporting a candidate in their community.
- ★ **Attend** local school board and school council meetings. Be informed about local school board elections. **Vote** in school board and school council elections.
- ★ **Ask** your superintendent if there is a P-16 Council or Council of Partners in your region. Encourage your district to participate or to get involved in organizing one if there is none.
- ★ **Support** superior performance from school board members, administrators, and teachers.
- ★ If you have questions about whether the law is being followed in your district, **talk** with your principal, superintendent, or school board members. If that does not correct the problem or answer your questions, contact the Office of Education Accountability at (800) 242-0520.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Council on Postsecondary Education**, (502) 573-1555 or visit the Web site at <http://www.cpe.state.ky.us/>.
- **Kentucky Association of School Councils**, (859) 238-2188 or visit the Web site at <http://www.kasc.net/>.
- **Kentucky Community and Technical College System**, (859) 246-3146, or visit the Web site at <http://www.kctcs.net/>.
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Legal Services**, (502) 564-4474, or visit the Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Administrative+Resources/Legal+and+Legislative+Services/default.htm>.
Office of Education Accountability, (800) 242-0520.
- **Kentucky School Boards Association**, (502) 695-4630 or visit the Web site at <http://www.ksba.org/>.
- **Partnership for Successful Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org or visit the Web site at www.partnershipforsuccessfulschools.org
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/>.

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL SCHEDULES AND CALENDARS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- State law requires that the minimum school term include 185 days, including the equivalent of 175 six-hour instructional days. The 2006 General Assembly added two instructional days to the calendar by mandating that the equivalent of 177 six-hour instructional days be included for the 2007-08 school year. The legislature provided \$32.6 million in the budget to assist districts with costs related to adding those days.
- Neither the law nor the regulation requires schools or districts to implement alternative calendars. Decisions about changing school calendars are left to local districts. The 1994 General Assembly passed a resolution asking the Kentucky Department of Education to promote the idea of **year-round school calendars** and assist schools and districts in gathering information. The purpose was to encourage educators to think about using time in more effective ways to support student learning.
- The 1996 General Assembly gave schools **more flexibility** in setting school calendars (length of the school year and school day) as long as 1,050 hours of instruction are provided for students each year. This is equal to 175 six-hour days and includes flexibility for half-day students as long as 525 hours of instruction are provided. With the additional two days beginning in 2007-08, schools must provide 1,062 hours of instruction for full-day students and 531 for half-day students.
- The law also requires that year-round or alternative school programs begin no earlier than July 1 and end no later than June 30.

RESULTS

- A few school districts have implemented full-fledged **year-round calendars** (meaning they have 8 weeks or less of summer break) and 161 school districts have modified their calendars by adding fall breaks of a few days to as many as three weeks. These schools and districts are required to have the same amount of instructional time for students, but use a different schedule to put in that time.
- A school district may **dismiss students early** one day a week, allowing teachers time for planning together, and then add more days to the calendar to make up the time lost or add more minutes to each school day.
- **The Kentucky Association for Year Round Education**, created in 1996, can provide assistance to schools and districts interested in adopting alternative calendars. See below for contact information.
- **Block scheduling** has been adopted by many high schools. Students have fewer subjects with longer class periods each day and complete courses in one semester. Instead of six one-hour classes, students might have four 90-minute classes or different classes on different days. There are several variations of block scheduling.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- ✎ School districts have formed **local task forces** to study ways to use school time more efficiently and effectively. They review research about how the school day, week, and year can be reorganized to enhance student learning and support teachers by providing more time for planning and professional development. Some districts have studied the issues and decided against alternate calendars. It is important for each district to consider its own student and community needs in making these changes.
- ✎ Early **lessons learned** by schools and districts that should be considered when studying changes in scheduling include:
 - ✓ make sure there is adequate time to plan before changing to a different schedule
 - ✓ involve all persons and groups who are affected by these changes such as teachers, parents, and students, as well as community, business, and church leaders
 - ✓ use a decision-making process that is fair and based on the needs of the local community
 - ✓ realize that such changes challenge local culture and traditions
 - ✓ be sure teachers reorganize their lesson plans to cover the same material in different ways
 - ✓ make sure changes are made for the right reason — to improve academic achievement for students

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Ask** if your district or any schools in your district are considering a different schedule. Ask about the purpose of those considerations. Is it to improve student learning, decrease costs, or use the available building space more efficiently and perhaps avoid building new schools?
- ★ If your school or district has adopted an alternative schedule, **ask** what has happened as a result of those changes.
- ★ **Volunteer** to serve on a committee that is studying these issues.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Association for Year Round Education**, 502-349-7000.
- **Kentucky Department of Education**, (502) 564-4718 or visit the Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Default.htm>.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/>.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- **Kentucky law states:** “The General Assembly recognizes that public education involves shared responsibilities. State government, local communities, parents, students, and school employees must work together to create an efficient public school system. Parents and students must assist schools with efforts to assure student attendance, preparation for school, and involvement in learning. The cooperation of all involved is necessary to assure that desired outcomes are achieved . . .”
- In addition the law recognizes the **importance of parent involvement** by requiring the following:
 - ✓ Parents are members of school-based decision making councils at each school, making important decisions about school issues around learning and instruction.
 - ✓ Parents must be involved in setting targets and developing plans to close achievement gaps.
 - ✓ One of the critical attributes of the primary program is positive parent involvement.
 - ✓ The preschool program requires that schools involve parents.
 - ✓ Parents are required members of local family resource and youth services center advisory councils and must make up no less than one-third of the membership.
 - ✓ The membership of superintendent screening committees includes parents.
 - ✓ The state board requires that parents be represented on local facilities planning groups that study building and redistricting needs of school districts.
 - ✓ Parents are represented on the School Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability Council that advises the board of education and legislature on implementation of the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System and No Child Left Behind.
 - ✓ Federal law requires that parents be included on individual education planning meetings for students with special learning needs.
 - ✓ State law provides for four of the 19 members of the Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education to be parents.
 - ✓ Parents are included on school audit teams.
- **Parents are defined**, for the purpose of school-based decision making, as parents, stepparents, or foster parents, or a person who has legal custody of a student and with whom the student resides.
- The Kentucky Board of Education has a **policy statement** titled *Parent and Family Involvement Initiative* that recognizes the importance of the family’s role in educating children. It encourages schools to welcome parents and families and engage them in their child’s education. (See Tool Kit below to access a copy.)
- Yearly school and district report cards are required by state and federal law to give parents and citizens more information about their schools. See page 12 for details.
- The **Federal No Child Left Behind** (NCLB) law gives parents whose children attend Title 1 Schools, options in working to assure their children get a good education. NCLB requires states to set standards for learning in reading, math and science, assess student progress on meeting the standards and issue a report card that includes the percent of students reaching a proficient level of achievement as a whole and by subgroup. Goals are established that must be met for all students and

by each subgroup based on ethnicity, poverty, English as a second language, and disabilities. Title I schools failing to reach the goals for all students and for each subgroup in reading and math fail to make “adequate yearly progress” and face consequences that give parents choices for their children. See assessment and accountability beginning on page 1 for more information.

- The requirements for parent involvement are described in *No Child Left Behind: What’s In It for Parents?** as follows:
 - ✓ Every Title I school must have a **written parent involvement policy**, developed with and approved by parents.
 - ✓ **School-Parent Compact.** Every Title I school must have a school-parent compact, developed with and approved by parents, that describes how the school and parents will build a partnership to improve student achievement.
 - ✓ **District Policy.** Every school district must have a written Title I parent involvement policy that is developed with and approved by parents, and evaluated every year.
 - ✓ **Report Cards.** The school district must distribute a report card specifying how every school and the district as a whole are performing. This applies to all schools and districts.
 - ✓ **Public School Choice.** If a Title I school has not made adequate yearly progress (AYP) over the past two or more years, parents have two options. They can ask to transfer their children to a school that is making adequate progress. Or they can request supplemental services and become involved in improving the school....After three years of not making AYP, the school must provide “supplemental education services” to children who remain at the school.
 - ✓ **State Review.** The state education agency must monitor the school districts’ Title I programs to make sure they carry out the law. If the district is not involving parents, parents and community members should appeal to the state.
- **Title II.** All classroom teachers must be **highly qualified** (as defined by federal law). Parents may ask to see teacher credentials and parents of students assigned to teachers who do not meet the qualifications for the content area they are teaching must be notified.
- **Title III. Bilingual Education.** Schools and districts receiving Title III funds must develop plans to involve and effectively communicate with parents of children with limited English proficiency.
- **Title IV, Part A. Safe and Drug-Free Schools.** This provision allows parents of students who are victims of violence at school or who attend a “persistently dangerous school” to transfer to a safer public school. States must define “persistently dangerous.” Schools applying for Title IV funds must involve parents in establishing and carrying out these programs.

* Source for NCLB Section: Anne T. Henderson, *No Child Left Behind: What’s In It for Parents?* Parent Leadership Associates, 2002

RESULTS

- A 50-member **Commissioner's Parent Advisory Council** has been created to advise the Commissioner of Education on policy issues and increase the positive leadership of parents for improving public education in Kentucky. The commissioner meets with this state-level council four times each year.
- The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence sponsors the **Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership**, a program that prepares parents to understand Kentucky's standards-based education system and become full partners with schools as they focus on student achievement. The first institute of was held in the fall of 1997. Since then over 1300 parents have completed the training and have gone back to their schools and communities and developed projects that engage more parents in working to improve student achievement. Call (800) 928-2111, or Lexington area 233-9849, for more information.

The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence also sponsors, with assistance from The Kentucky Center, a two-day program that enables parents to understand how the arts support core content and what they can do to support the arts in their schools. The first **Parents and Teachers as Arts Partners**, with parents attending with a teacher from their school, was held in 2005. Call (800) 928-2111, or Lexington area 233-9849, ext. 232 for more information.

Starting Strong is a program that the Prichard Committee has adapted from its Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership for parents of preschool children. The program brings parents and early education and care teachers and administrators together for three days of training to build partnerships to improve outcomes for young children. For more information call 800-928-2111, Lexington area 859-233-9849 ext. 232.

In 2002 the Prichard Committee launched the **Center for Parent Leadership** in response to requests from across the country for assistance in developing parent involvement programs like the Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership. This consulting arm of the Committee focuses on development of parent involvement programs and training that target improved student achievement. For more information contact the Center for Parent Leadership at the Prichard Committee. (See below for contact information.)

Parent graduates of the Prichard Committee's Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership in Fayette County, worked with the district and other community leaders to find ways the district could support parent involvement. The result was development of a **Parent Involvement Tool Kit for School Leaders**, resources and ideas intended to help educators and parent leaders think about and plan to increase parent involvement. Hard copies of the Tool Kit were made available to each school in Fayette County, but no longer available. However, a Web-based tool kit was developed on the Fayette County Schools' Web site and is available to anyone with Internet access at <http://www.fcps.net/fcs/>. A hard copy of the table of contents with a list and description of each item in the tool kit is available for \$10 from the Prichard Committee. See below.

- The Kentucky Department of Education Web site has a section for parents that allows parents to sign up for updates from the department, see your school report card, and find other valuable information. Visit it at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Instructional+Resources/Student+and+Family+Support/Parents+and+Families/default.htm>, or go to <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Default.htm> and click on "Parents & Families" on the left side of the first page.

- **GEAR UP, Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Education Programs**, is a federal program designed to encourage and support middle and high school students to attend post secondary education. It targets low income students and those who traditionally do not attend college and their parents. (See page 39 for more information.)
- The **Partnership Cadre for School and Community Development** is a group selected and trained by the Partnership for Successful Schools to help schools and communities work together to improve student achievement. Many participants are parents. See Partnership for Successful Schools below for contact information.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Check** with the Prichard Committee to learn when and how a Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership will be offered in your area: (800) 928-2111, Lexington area 233-9849 ext. 232 or visit the Web site at <http://www.cipl.org/>.
- ★ **Review** your school and district report cards, available from your school or district offices and in the parent section of the Kentucky Department of Education Web site.
- ★ **Ask** to see your school's test scores broken out by gender, race, poverty and so on or visit the Kentucky Department of Education Web site at www.education.ky.gov. You can also visit <http://www.just4kids.com> or <http://www.schoolresults.org>, national Web sites with individual school data. If your school has significant achievement gaps, volunteer to help establish targets for and develop plans to close the gaps. Attend school and district meetings required by law to present these plans to the public.
- ★ **Ask** to see a copy of the *Core Content for Assessment* and the *Program of Studies*, guides for teachers to use as they prepare curriculum and instruction. Visit the Department of Education Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Default.htm> for a copy. The Kentucky Association of School Councils has Core Content Cards, a tool to help review and plan curriculum for parents and educators (859) 238-2188. Hold a discussion about curriculum and instruction with the PTA, school council curriculum committee, or other groups of parents.
- ★ **Ask** to see a copy of your Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) to see how your school intends to improve student learning. **Get involved** with the planning process.
- ★ **Visit** the Parent Involvement Tool Kit for School Leaders Web site for ideas on how to get parents in your school more engaged in student learning. (www.fcps.net/fcs/)
- ★ **Encourage** your school to become a Welcoming School. A Welcoming School encourages parents and the public to become more involved in education by implementing the following practices. Call the Prichard Committee for more information (see below).
 - ✓ Display a mission statement committing the work of the school to students, families, and the community it serves.
 - ✓ Reflect an orderly and safe environment conducive to effective learning by students and productive work by staff.
 - ✓ Display internal and external signs welcoming visitors to the school.
 - ✓ Use friendly language to describe what visitors should do when entering the school.

- ✓ Have designated parking areas for visitors.
 - ✓ Employ staff who are friendly to visitors, provide needed information easily, and answer the phone in a way that makes callers glad they have called the school.
 - ✓ Set standards of welcoming behavior for all staff and volunteers, including bus drivers, custodians, and cafeteria workers.
 - ✓ Display students' academic work throughout the building.
 - ✓ Display large readable signs with directions to such areas as the library, gym, cafeteria, and restrooms.
 - ✓ Have an identified and furnished work space for parents and other volunteers.
 - ✓ Have a cheerful and furnished waiting area for visitors.
 - ✓ Have clearly written information available to parents and visitors explaining school philosophy and programs and how a person can be involved.
 - ✓ Have an outside marquee, readable from the street, which carries notices of meetings, and recognition of students/staff/organizations.
 - ✓ Allow staff to be easily accessible to parents.
 - ✓ Produce a climate that is cheerful and student-centered.
 - ✓ Ensure that students demonstrate friendly and courteous behavior.
- ★ **Organize a Parents and Teachers Talking Together (PT3)** for your school. This is a meeting where teachers and parents discuss goals for children in their school and actions to achieve those goals. Contact the Prichard Committee for more information.
- ★ **Get a copy** of *Conway Middle School: Student-Led Conferences* and encourage your school to consider involving students in parent-teacher conferences. (Available at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org>, under publications.)
- ★ **Run** for a seat on your school council or your school board or work to find good candidates. (See School-based Decision Making, page 60 and Governance, page 92.)
- ★ **Contact** the Partnership for Successful Schools about inviting a member of their Cadre for School and Community Development to help your community get involved in improving student achievement. Ask for a copy of *How Students Learn Best: In Safe and Welcoming Schools*, a tool kit for research on the relationship between safe and welcoming schools, strategies for creating a welcoming environment and characteristics of a welcoming school. (See contact information below.)
- ★ **Encourage** local business owners to use the *Learning Equals Earning Employee Communications Packet* developed by the Partnership for Successful Schools for ways to help employees support education. Topics include reading, math, science, summer learning, technology, quality teaching, workplace skills and back-to-school issues. **Ask** for a copy of the packet which also includes good information for parents. See below.
- ★ **Visit** the Prichard Committee Web site or call for a copy of the *Glossary of Kentucky Education Terms*. Share it with others.
- ★ **Volunteer** to serve on a school council committee.
- ★ **Get involved** with your PTA/PTO/PTSA. Learn about their Rock and Read program to involve senior citizens in reading with children. If your school does not have a PTA, **form** one. Call the Kentucky PTA office at (502) 226-6607.

- ★ **Stay in contact with your state legislators.** Call and leave a message for legislators on the Legislative Message Line at (800) 372-7181; write to legislators at Capitol Annex, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601; send an e-mail message. The Legislative Research Commission Web site at <http://www.lrc.state.ky.us/> has an icon at the bottom of the home page that allows you to e-mail legislators.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Congress of Parents and Teachers** at (502) 226-6607.
- **Kentucky Department of Education** at 502-564-4770 or visit the Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Default.htm>.
- **Parent Involvement Tool Kit for School Leaders**, Prichard Committee and Fayette County Public Schools, available on line only at <http://www.fcps.net/fcs/>.
Partnership for Successful Schools, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Web site at www.partnershipforsuccessfulschools.org
Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at <http://www.prichardcommittee.org/>.
- **Center for Parent Leadership**, <http://www.centerforparentleadership.org/>.
- **Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership**, <http://www.cipl.org/>.

Goals for Kentucky Schools

- (a) Schools shall expect a high level of achievements of all students.
- (b) Schools shall develop their students' ability to:
 - 1. Use basic communication and mathematics skills for purposes and situations they will encounter throughout their lives;
 - 2. Apply core concepts and principles from mathematics, the sciences, the arts, the humanities, social studies, and practical living studies to situations they will encounter throughout their lives;
 - 3. Become self-sufficient individuals of good character exhibiting the qualities of altruism citizenship, courtesy, honesty, human worth, justice, knowledge, respect, responsibility, and self-discipline;*
 - 4. Become responsible members of a family, work group, or community, including demonstrating effectiveness in community service;*
 - 5. Think and solve problems in school situations and in a variety of situations they will encounter in life; and
 - 6. Connect and integrate experiences and new knowledge from all subject matter fields with what they have previously learned and build on past learning experiences to acquire new information through various media sources.
- (c) Schools shall increase their students' rate of school attendance.
- (d) Schools shall reduce their students' dropout and retention rates.
- (e) Schools shall reduce physical and mental health barriers to learning.
- (f) Schools shall be measured on the proportion of students who make a successful transition to work, post-secondary education, and the military.

* Goals 3 and 4 are not included in Kentucky's assessment and accountability system.

Source: Kentucky Revised Statutes, Section 158.6451.